

Pier Pressure, by Robert Ross

A Big Finish Productions Dr Who Audio Drama, released Jan 2006

[Part One]

ALBERT: Such unusual generosity must be making you feel unwell. Now, as your physician, I prescribe a bit of neck-stretching.

EMILY: Oh, Albert, don't. You give me the willies. Albert?
(Seagulls.)

EMILY: Albert? Where are you?

ALBERT: I'm here, my pretty maiden, poised to embrace you in my arms and carry you away from your devious guardian.

EMILY: Albert, get down from there. Whatever do you think you're doing?

ALBERT: I'm protecting your honour, darling.

EMILY: My honour doesn't need protecting, thank you very much. The very idea. Come on, stop messing about, and get off that thing.

(Splash and crunch of shingle.)

ALBERT: I thought you were me damsel in distress.

EMILY: The only thing I'm distressed about is the state of my shoes. If I'd have known we were going to go gallivanting over the beach, I wouldn't have worn these shoes in the first place, now would I?

ALBERT: Well

EMILY: Well, of course I wouldn't have worn them. I mean, Mister James Smith, he's a fair employer, but if I turn up tomorrow morning wearing shabby shoes, just how many garments do you think I'm going to be able to sell for him?

ALBERT: Well

EMILY: None! That's how many, none. And if I can't sell garments, Mister Smith won't think twice about employing someone who can, and I can't afford to lose another job, Albert. Not another one, what with everything the way it is.

ALBERT: Oh, for heaven's sake, Emily, no one's going to lose their job. This is 1936. The people are revolting.

EMILY: And you are more revolting than most.

ALBERT: You didn't say that at the flicks tonight, now did you?

EMILY: You had me at a disadvantage. You know fully well what Errol Flynn does to me.

ALBERT: This is what I call a timely interruption, but what'll come of it the Devil himself only knows.
(*Captain Blood*)

EMILY: Oh, Albert.

ALBERT: Oh, come on, take your shoes off and we can have a paddle.

EMILY: I shouldn't really. I promised me mum I'd be home by ten.

ALBERT: Oh, come on, Em. A few more minutes won't matter, will it? Give me a kiss, milady.

EMILY: Albert, stop it! There's plenty of time for all that nonsense.

ALBERT: But how do you know? How do you know how much time we have? Haven't you heard the stories?

EMILY: Stories?

ALBERT: The Phantom Blood-sucker of Preston Park.

EMILY: Oh, don't start that again. It frightens me.

ALBERT: No, it's true, honest. Strange goings-on around here.

EMILY: We're miles from Preston Park.

ALBERT: You don't think the Blood-sucker wastes his time up there, do you? No, he likes to suck upon fresh young maidens. It's fresh blood he's after. (*Dracula*) He never drinks wine.

EMILY: I'm not listening.

ALBERT: It comes down to the beach here and waits. It has all the time in the world, you see. It don't fret about the days passing him by, or the weeks, or the years. It just waits, biding its time, patient, knowing, dank like the grave, forever waiting until an innocent beauty such as yourself, Emily, happens to wander onto the beach.

EMILY: I don't believe it.

ALBERT: That's what it wants you to say. No one believes it. But it just sits there, waiting. Waiting for the next young thing to bravely walk the beach alone.

EMILY: Alone?

ALBERT: Oh yeah, you've got to be alone. You've got no problems as long as I'm here.

EMILY: Really, Albert.

ALBERT: Really.

(Roar of beast nearby.)

EVELYN: Well, I think it would do us both the world of good.

DOCTOR: After a lifetime of experience, Evelyn, I'm not convinced that *your* world has a great deal of good left on it.

EVELYN: Oh, don't be so cynical. If you felt like that, you'd never walk out of those doors ever again.

DOCTOR: And would that be such a hardship? Would anybody on your planet really be bothered one way or another?

EVELYN: Oh, a universe without the Doctor? It certainly doesn't fill me with a lot of confidence. Oh, come on. Don't get down in the dumps. You're always the same after a misadventure or two.

DOCTOR: Try and understand, Evelyn. It's the futility of it all. You can't grasp the sheer enormity of my experiences, my lives spent in the face of certain danger. Crazy beings determined to control the entire universe, countless centuries wasted

EVELYN: Never wasted, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Wasted on puny civilisations that don't give a tailor's cuss whether I arrive in the nick of time or not.

EVELYN: Oh yes, what is the point of it all?

DOCTOR: Exactly.

EVELYN: I was being sarcastic. You're just in a foul mood and you simply won't admit it.

DOCTOR: Of course I'm in a foul mood. Now, if there's one thing I never do, Evelyn, it's act petulant in the face of tortured soul-searching.

EVELYN: Is that a fact?

DOCTOR: One of the beauties of the Tardis is that it is marginally bigger on the inside than on the outside.

EVELYN: I have noticed. It was the sort of fact that hit me in the face the moment I walked into it.

DOCTOR: Therefore she provides ample room for solitude.

EVELYN: Solitude? Why do you want solitude?

DOCTOR: I'm an alien, Evelyn. My actions are alien. You are from Earth, therefore your actions are totally alien to me. Once in a while, just occasionally, it would be nice to be able to enjoy a thoroughly bad mood

EVELYN: Enjoy?

DOCTOR: To enjoy a thoroughly bad mood without having to apologise for one's irritability.

EVELYN: I'm sorry.

DOCTOR: But I am not.

EVELYN: No, I'm sorry that you want a good gloat over your own miserable self-indulgence. But while I'm still a guest of this battered contraption, then I have a right to speak my mind and shake you out of your doldrums.

(The Doctor sighs heavily.)

EVELYN: Oh, come on, Doctor, buck yourself together. Worse things happen at sea, and all that.

DOCTOR: We are at sea.

EVELYN: What was that?

DOCTOR: To all intents and purposes, we are at sea. Why do you think this faithful old girl is called a ship?

EVELYN: Pedantic hyperbole.

(The Doctor mutters under his breath.)

EVELYN: It's not healthy, just sitting around moping about nothing. Read a good book. (the Doctor scoffs) Write a good book, then. What about your autobiography? Should be a rollicking read. Totally self-centred, of course.

DOCTOR: Which autobiography isn't, may I ask?

EVELYN: That's better. I can't stand that grouch act. Now, where's your pioneering spirit gone?

DOCTOR: Oh, I don't know. The frontiers became too small and the trails too wide. There's no fun any more. There's no point to it.

EVELYN: Was there ever a point to it? As for fun? Heavens, if it's fun you want, you're in the wrong line of business. Saviour of the universe must be hard graft, after all these years. So, was there a point to it all?

DOCTOR: I certainly hope so. Oh, of course there was. I just don't know what's wrong with me at the moment. Boredom, perhaps, or just plain laziness. The mind is a complicated instrument. It needs

puzzles and problems and pithy

EVELYN: Alliteration?

DOCTOR: Yes, quite. And a Time Lord's brain needs stimulation even more so. You can't imagine it, Evelyn.

EVELYN: Try me.

DOCTOR: Oh, I know, I know, you can imagine it. Of course you can. But to have seen what I have seen, to have been where I have been. Sirius Four, Metabelis Three.

EVELYN: Sounds like a football result.

DOCTOR: (laughs) A match I would have paid to see.

EVELYN: I know what you need.

DOCTOR: A half-time orange?

EVELYN: A holiday.

DOCTOR: Oh, Evelyn, how many more times

EVELYN: I don't mean a busman's holiday. I mean a proper, fully relaxed break from Time, space, this blue box, even a break from me if you want.

DOCTOR: Without each and every one of those things mentioned, any holiday would be doomed to failure. Particularly you. What would I do all day? Who would I blame if I make a mistake, tell me that.

EVELYN: So what about it?

DOCTOR: A holiday? Oh, I don't know. I've come to the conclusion that I attract trouble, or trouble attracts me.

EVELYN: Isn't that the same thing? What about Blackpool?

DOCTOR: Oh, no. I tried it once. Child's play it wasn't.

EVELYN: I haven't been to Blackpool for years. It was so bright and colourful. Red-nosed comics and toffee apples.

(The Tardis materialises.)

DOCTOR: If your second-hand holiday brochure has put ideas into her head, I'll

EVELYN: You'll what.

DOCTOR: I'll buy you a toffee apple. Come on.

EMILY: What was that scream, Bert?

ALBERT: How the hell should I know? It sounded like all the sea creatures ever imagined were having a cocktail party.

EMILY: It's no joke. I need a drink.

ALBERT: You need a drink? I need a drink.

EMILY: If you drink any more, I'll begin to doubt your word, never mind what the police would think.

ALBERT: What's the police got to do with it?

EMILY: Oh, you are going to report what we heard, aren't you?

ALBERT: Er, well, I dunno. You know me and the police. Rather too well acquainted for my liking.

EMILY: I told you not to hand out them leaflets of yours.

ALBERT: If this nation has got so oppressed that the worker in the street can't stand up for his rights, then we may as well all move to Russia and bask in the glorious

EMILY: Albert, shut up and do something!

ALBERT: What?

EMILY: Well, tell someone.

ALBERT: All right, I will, I will. As soon as I have a drink.

(Applause.)

BILLY: A wonderful show tonight, Mister Miller. I've never laughed so much in my life.

MAX: Huh. Maybe you should have been in the audience, then, Billy. No one else seemed to agree with you.

(Max Miller, the Cheekie Chappie, played by the President of his fan club - Roy Hudd.)

BILLY: It's the season, Mister Miller.

MAX: The season?

BILLY: Yes. It's either far too hot and they're out there taking in the summer breeze, or it's far too cold and they're staying in listening to the wireless.

MAX: Yeah, well, they won't have me on Children's Hour. I don't know why. Besides, I feel like a fraud.

BILLY: What on Earth?

MAX: Well, you know, inviting you down here. Pick up some tips, I told you, didn't I? Now, what sort of tips are you going to pick up with me on this sort of form, eh?

BILLY: Let me tell you, it beats the Ghost Train. And London audiences are just as bad at the moment.

MAX: Eh?

BILLY: I reckon watching a true pro like you, Mister Miller, it's just the tonic someone like me needs. It's either the stage or the Army, and you can't see me as a Sergeant Major, can you?

MAX: Not really, no. Well, perhaps you're right. Yes, of course you're right. Look, I'll help in any way I can, son. You know that. don't you?

(Clues to Billy being young Billy Hartnell - who played Sgt Major Bullimore in the Army Game prior to getting cast by Verity Lambert in - well, you know.)

BILLY: I know that. Come on, Mister Miller. Let's nip in the bar. You'll be as right as rain in next to no time.

MAX: Ah, then, well, I shouldn't really, Billy. Mum always expects me home at a decent hour whenever I'm playing the Hippodrome. You know that.

BILLY: I'm buying.

MAX: In that case, Billy, I would be delighted.

(Note to young and/or non-English readers - Mum in this context is his wife, the mother of his children, not his own mother.)

EVELYN: Blackpool's certainly changed.

DOCTOR: And it's not India, before you start complaining even more.

EVELYN: Oh, Doctor, I do know the Royal Pavilion when I see it.

DOCTOR: Yes. The Royal Pavilion. London by sea. Brighton. How wonderful. You know, I knew the old girl wouldn't like the idea of going back to Blackpool. Unhappy experience, bad memories. But Brighton? Exquisite. I wonder if the Prince Regent is at home?

EVELYN: Don't you know?

DOCTOR: According to the Tardis readout, this should be Blackpool in the 1980s. Rather garish decade, if you ask me.

EVELYN: And?

DOCTOR: It could be Brighton in the 1980s. It could even be an intergalactic representation of typical Earth seaside culture for a school excursion.

EVELYN: Really, Doctor. I would have thought that intergalactic exhibitional organisers would have had far more interesting things to reconstruct.

DOCTOR: Far more interesting than the Royal Pavilion? Are you mad? Oh, don't answer that. You must be mad. That's the trouble with your narrow-minded little planet, so caught up in the wonders of the unknown that you fail to appreciate what you have. A towering monument to one man's vision, dedicatedly reproducing in his own unique style a little soupçon of India in his own back yard. It's majestic, magical.

EVELYN: So is it?

DOCTOR: Is it what?

EVELYN: An intergalactic thingy.

DOCTOR: Of course not. It's Brighton. I'd recognise those seagulls anywhere.

DRUNK: Can I tell you a joke, Mister Miller?

MAX: I dunno. Can you?

BILLY: Do us a favour, friend. Go and bother somebody else, eh?

DRUNK: That's charming, that is. And another thing, Miller. You were rotten tonight. Bleeding rotten.

MAX: Thank you so much for that constructive criticism. You see?

BILLY: Oh, Mister Miller, he's had too much to drink.

MAX: And I've not had enough. Your round, isn't it?

BILLY: Has been so far.

ALBERT: Two large brandies please, Miss.

EMILY: I can't drink brandy, Albert. Me mother'll go spare.

MAX: Nonsense, love. It'll put hairs on your chest.

ALBERT: Mister Miller.

MAX: Hey.

ALBERT: Oh, Mister Miller, I'm a huge fan of yours.

MAX: Oh, were you in tonight?

ALBERT: No.

MAX: Not that big a fan, then.

ALBERT: Well

MAX: Don't worry, son. You didn't miss much tonight.
EMILY: But you did.
MAX: What?
ALBERT: Oh, nothing. Nothing, Mister Miller. You're in pictures.
MAX: So I'm told.
ALBERT: It's just, I'm an actor
BILLY: I'd better stop you right there, chum. Mister Miller is not a casting agent.
MAX: I've got as much clout as a sock full of cold porridge, actually. Actually, that would give you quite a nasty blow, that, if such a thing were possible.
EMILY: Oh, Mister Miller.
MAX: But seriously, son, just because it has Warner Brothers on the posters it don't mean I'm having cucumber sandwiches with Errol Flynn and Bette Davis.
BILLY: More like Joe Davis.
MAX: Hey, I'll do the funnies if you don't mind, Billy. Have you got a pencil? I'll give you an autograph and then you can be on your way. Besides, you should be talking to Billy here.
ALBERT: Really?
MAX: Oh, yes. You've been in pictures, haven't you, Billy?
BILLY: I'm An Explosive.
MAX: Yes, and he's been in pictures, too.
ALBERT: I've never seen it.
BILLY: Don't worry, son. No one else has either.
MAX: What was the other one you just did?
BILLY: While Parents Sleep.
MAX: Yes, that's the one. Parents were asleep, kids were. In fact the whole audience couldn't keep their eyes open.
EMILY: But Mister Miller, something terrible has happened.
MAX: Yes, the day While Parents Sleep escaped was a pretty dark day, I can assure you.
EMILY: It's serious, Mister Miller.
MAX: What? Has one of your water-wings sprung a leak or something?
ALBERT: Em.
MAX: Let her speak, son. You won't get a word in until her mouth's worn out anyway.
EMILY: It's just that we were walking on the beach

NEWSBOY: Murder! Murder! Cold-blooded murder!
DOCTOR: Sounds interesting.
EVELYN: Why O why does death follow you round like, I don't know what.
DOCTOR: Death? I suppose you could call it an occupational hazard, or the curse of having a mode of transport that can sense danger twenty million light years away. Boy, I'll have one of those.
NEWSBOY: Right-o, sir.
EVELYN: Well?
DOCTOR: Is that it? Hey, you there.
NEWSBOY: What do you want?
DOCTOR: What's all this about a murder, then?
NEWSBOY: At the flicks, mate. Boris Karloff in Charlie Chan at the Opera. Cracking film.
DOCTOR: Why, you cheeky
NEWSBOY: And the disappearance, and all.
DOCTOR: What disappearance?
NEWSBOY: Stop press. Another one's gone missing.
DOCTOR: Another one? Oh yes, stop press. Another one *has* gone missing. A pearl of Earth journalism here, I see. Larry Michaels, 22, vanished from Brighton beach late last night, claims an unnamed eye-witness. The police do not suspect foul play. Brilliant. How very unenlightening. Boy? Boy?
EVELYN: He's disappeared as well, by the looks of things.
DOCTOR: Yes, no doubt making his own stop press tomorrow night. Oh, I do hate mysteries.
EVELYN: Liar.
DOCTOR: All right, then. Let me rephrase that. I do hate mysteries without any mystery. This Larry chappie has obviously had a few glasses of some alcoholic refreshment and wandered off somewhere.
EVELYN: If they reported that every time it happened, the papers'd be full of nothing else. Surely there's more to it than that.

DOCTOR: Of course there is. Isn't there always?

EVELYN: Never a dull moment, as you promised.

DOCTOR: Indeed, indeed. Now, first things first. I think a tavern in the town is called for.

EVELYN: You're not going to break into song, are you?

DOCTOR: Not this time, Evelyn. A local drinking place is what we need.

EVELYN: I'm getting seriously worried about you.

DOCTOR: Why?

EVELYN: Because you seem hell-bent on visiting every pub on the planet.

DOCTOR: Evelyn, your lack of knowledge of your own planet's culture sometimes beggars belief.

EVELYN: What's that got to do with your love of the hops?

DOCTOR: Conan Doyle.

EVELYN: Who?

DOCTOR: Sayers? Edmund Crispin? All the greats knew it. If you want to get to the bottom of an English mystery, you have to get to the bottom of an English pint glass first. The hub of the tight-knit community, the refuge for an untight one. The British pub. Tongues are loose, gossip flows like Chardonnay. Besides which, I'm hungry. I wonder if we're too early for chicken in a basket? The 1980s did have some compensations, you know.

TALBOT: Why did she have to do it, on a filthy night like that? What kind of foolishness had seized her. If she, if my dear precious one was still here (hoarse) she would reek. Reek like the rotting mackerel it seems eternity has seen fit to surround me with. Me! And do stop pining for the loss of your wife, Professor. It does get so very boring after the first ten years, Professor. Professor? I never did ask you, Talbot, but that title of yours, was it earned, or did it cost you? (normal) I am a showman. My wife was my assistant. There was a storm. She (hoarse) She died. I know. I know. I was in residence at the time. She fell into the water. She died. (normal) You said you would help me. (hoarse) I said I would try. Do not assume so much. These things take time. Power must be earned. There are some things that simply can't be bought, Professor.

(Entering a pub.)

DOCTOR: Besides, that boy has no fundamental knowledge of twentieth century cinema.

EVELYN: What boy?

DOCTOR: The news vendor boy. Boris Karloff wasn't the killer in Charlie Chan at the Opera. He was a red herring. Talking of which. Ah, Miss? Am I too early for chicken in a basket?

BARMAID: You're too late for chicken in anything. Do you know what time it is?

DOCTOR: Alas, no. Ironic, isn't it.

MAX: So, this horrible noise was coming from the West Pier. Now what does that prove? A few revellers from London probably had a bit too much. They should have been here for the second house tonight. Might have livened things up a bit.

ALBERT: Actually, Mister Miller, as Em says, it wasn't any human sound like I've heard before.

MAX: Oh, come on, son. Don't go giving me tales of sea monsters, not tonight. I've heard more stories than you'll ever know, and I can't tell any of them on the National Programme. Bleeding BBC, pardon my French.

BILLY: It does sound a bit queer, though, doesn't it?

MAX: Billy, Billy. Queer is, well, stone the crows, queer is that bloke over there. Cor blimey, and they say my clothes are bright. Lit up like a Christmas tree, he is.

ALBERT: Mister Miller.

MAX: Look, son, I don't know what you want me to do about it. I don't own the town.

ALBERT: But you own the people.

MAX: How'd you mean?

ALBERT: This town loves you, Mister Miller. Maybe not tonight. I dunno, maybe it's all tied up in some weird futuristic whirlpool.

MAX: You've been watching too many pictures, son.

BILLY: It's true though, Max. This town loves you. What happened tonight, well, that sometimes happens. I don't hold with any men from Mars theories, but this town loves you. You could get to the bottom of this. Get to the bottom of this in no time, you could.

MAX: Well, that's very nice of you, Billy. That's very nice of you. And you, son. Very nice. But I just don't see what the problem is. Now, if I was that bloke over there, you know what I would do?

ALBERT: What?

BARMAID: Time, gentlemen, please.

MAX: I'd have got served before young Millie said the most dreaded words in the English language.

DOCTOR: Now that really is too much.

EVELYN: Oh well, come on, then. We won't learn anything in here, anyway.

DOCTOR: But you don't understand. Miss?

BARMAID: Can't you hear? Don't you understand English? I said time, gentlemen, please. Some of us have got homes to go to, you know.

MAX: Hey, hey, hey, Joseph! Oi! You in the coat of many colours. What are you having?

EVELYN: He's talking to you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: I'm quite aware of that, but I'm not in the habit of conversing with loud-mouthed riff-raff in public houses, particularly after hours. On the other hand, he seems a decent sort of chap, and those with the biggest mouths tend to engender the most interesting nuggets of information. You just have to be suitably tuned, alert to the nonsense, able to select the grain from the chaff.

EVELYN: Yes, I think you've made that point very well, Doctor. I'm waiting.

DOCTOR: Waiting? For what?

EVELYN: For you to locate your manners. That man was talking to you.

DOCTOR: Oh, very well. Yes? What is it?

EVELYN: Charm personified.

MAX: What's what, son?

DOCTOR: You were addressing me, were you not?

MAX: Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, I was. Sorry, you took so long to answer I lost my train of thought there for a moment. A drink. What are you having?

DOCTOR: My good man, aren't you aware of the fact that the young lady behind the bar here has called time?

MAX: Time waits for no man, save me.

DOCTOR: Oh, really.

MAX: And since when have you been a lady, Millie?

BARMAID: Oh, Mister Miller. Same again, is it?

MAX: Natch. And whatever those two, I mean, them two at the bar fancy. You'll get me into trouble, Millie, or vice versa. Your round, innit, Billy?

BILLY: Yes, my round. What about your wife?

MAX: Let Mum buy her own drink.

BILLY: No, no, I meant

MAX: I know what you mean. Blimey, Billy, I was only joking.

ALBERT: He is a comedian.

MAX: That's a matter of opinion at the moment, son, but thanks for the vote of confidence. You sorted for a drink, son?

EVELYN: Come on, Doctor.

DOCTOR: I don't like being called son. After all, I think I've earned a modicum of respect, don't you?

EVELYN: Oh, stop being so churlish and thank the man.

DOCTOR: Thank you so very much, Billy.

MAX: No worries, son. You see, the bar never shuts for Maxie.

EVELYN: Maxie? You're the Max Miller?

MAX: The very same. There'll never be another, you know, lady. Never be another. When they made me, they broke the mould.

DOCTOR: Max Miller? Well I never.

TALBOT: When I die, will this all end? Will it all have been for nothing? Answer me, I beseech you. Answer me. Why does it never answer me when I face my biggest crisis? What sort of lord is this that feeds me with power and hope and truth, feeds me with the understanding I must cling to, and then reverts, reverts quietly to nothing, hiding in the recesses of my mind, the recesses of my soul. If my soul is so worthless, then why do I obey? Why does he need me? Why do I need him? Oh, but rest awhile. Rest awhile and be safe. Safe in the knowledge that I love you, ocean child, My love is powerful, unyielding, unquenchable.

DOCTOR: Unbelievable.

MAX: I am, honestly. Or is it that you don't recognise me with my clothes off, Doctor?

DOCTOR: (laughs) There's a joke there somewhere, but it's far too early for the punchline.

MAX: Listen, listen. You don't work for the BBC, do you? Because if you do, I can change, you know. I can change until I get the cheque, and then it's every comic for himself.

DOCTOR: The British Broadcasting Corporation, often unforgiving to their finest assets, but no, Mister Miller. Alas, not in my jurisdiction, I fear.

MAX: Ah now, never mind. And listen, please. It's Maxie. Maxie. The costume isn't perfect, but as an admirer of mine, you've not done a bad job. Not a bad job at all.

EVELYN: I think he thinks you're a stalker, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Hmm? Beg your pardon?

EVELYN: You know, a fanatic, an obsessive. Dressing like your hero and all that.

MAX: Like I say, most flattering.

DOCTOR: Actually, my dress sense is my own.

EMILY: Unique, I should say.

DOCTOR: Indeed. Unique. Although I must say, perhaps an unintended half-saved memory from my youth may have inspired my tailoring.

MAX: Now, now, Doctor. Steady on. Your youth? You'll give me a bad name. I'm only forty, you know. I'm not ripe for the old people's home quite yet. You tell them at the BBC or wherever it is you work, you tell them Maxie Miller is in his prime.

ALBERT: That's right, Mister Miller. And, you know, if you do get an opportunity to talk to Mister Warner

MAX: Son, son, take my advice. Grab your girl by the arm, squeeze her tight, and take her home. I don't know what you heard tonight, but as far as I'm concerned, the best place for her is bed. Her bed, mind. With you in yours. You understand me?

DOCTOR: What do you mean, what you heard?

EMILY: Oh sir, it was horrible. Something not of this world.

DOCTOR: Indeed?

ALBERT: Like she said, sir. Something unhuman-like.

DOCTOR: Inhumanity? Not always a need for concern, but pray continue.

ALBERT: Well, like I was telling Mister Miller, Emily heard something

EMILY: We both heard it, Albert.

ALBERT: Yeah, we both heard something strange.

EMILY: Down on the beach.

ALBERT: We were just fooling around, sir, like you do.

EMILY: Just throwing pebbles into the sea and like, sir.

DOCTOR: Yes?

EMILY: And we heard this ungodly noise bellowing like some beast from the ocean. It came, sir, right from the ocean bed.

MAX: Now you get into yours and forget all about it.

EVELYN: Could this be something to do with the young man who disappeared, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Quite possibly. What have you heard about this? This disappearance from the sea front.

MAX: Oh, it's just some bloke had too much to drink. They'll find him in a day or two nursing a sore head and an empty back pocket.

DOCTOR: I think it's slightly more serious than that.

MAX: Can you be sure?

DOCTOR: Of course not, but weird and unexplainable noises, and disappearances, both on the same spot? That tends to stretch coincidence a tad further than my curiosity can stand.

EVELYN: Not that far, then.

DOCTOR: Oh, come now, Evelyn. Aren't you that little bit interested in what on Earth is going on here? This could have enormous consequences for your entire planet.

EVELYN: Or it could be nothing.

DOCTOR: This could fashion the very fabric of society for the next three hundred years.

EVELYN: Or it could be nothing.

DOCTOR: This could (pause) be nothing, I grant you, but wouldn't you hate it if you never found out?

EVELYN: That's the difference between you and me, Doctor. Sometimes, just sometimes, I could happily turn away and never face a problem that might not even be a problem.

DOCTOR: Shame on you.

EVELYN: Well, at least I'm please to see you behaving a bit more like your normal self. You were a total grouch back in the Tardis.

DOCTOR: Grouch? Me? Perish the thought.

DOCTOR: Is this the place.

ALBERT: That's it. It was coming from the bridge.

EMILY: Down by the pier.

EVELYN: Filthy night.

DOCTOR: Yes. You're sure it wasn't just the wind you heard? The sea crashing on the beach there?

Those pebbles can make a right royal racket if the surf hits them hard enough.

ALBERT: Look, I've seen enough Bela Lugosi films to know the difference between the wind in the trees and the owls hooting and the doors creaking, and something supernatural. This wasn't anything natural, I can tell you.

DOCTOR: You're just going to love the Creature from the Black Lagoon.

ALBERT: The what?

DOCTOR: A great creature feature, a wonderfully scary film. Not been released over here yet. Not a pretty sight.

MAX: I tell you what won't be a pretty sight, picture goer.

DOCTOR: What's that?

MAX: My missus's face when I get home. Have you seen what time it is?

DOCTOR: My dear Maxie, when you've been around as long as I have, you'll come to realise that time is relative.

MAX: And so is my mother in law, and she's none too cheerful when her little girl is upset. Little girl. Have you seen the size of it? Lawks.

DOCTOR: Come on, pull yourself together. This is serious. You know Brighton like the back of your proverbial hand.

MAX: Born and bred, and proud of it.

DOCTOR: Right then, give me some inside knowledge. Who or what is supposed to be at the end of the pier here?

MAX: Well, that's old Professor Talbot's pitch, isn't it.

DOCTOR: It is?

MAX: Well, of course it is. See that poster over there?

DOCTOR: The historical West Pier proudly presents the majestic, the monumental, the mercurial Professor Talbot.

MAX: That's him.

DOCTOR: He's walked the left-handed path. Has he? And returned enlightened. He's studied the centuries old ways of the mystic. He has engaged in forbidden tortures of the Far East.

MAX: Sounds like my honeymoon.

DOCTOR: It also sounds like this chap could have something to do with whatever is going on around here.

ALBERT: I didn't see anything, Doctor, just heard.

DOCTOR: Yes, I know what you heard. Well, Maxie?

MAX: Well what?

DOCTOR: Well, this Professor Talbot. I think it's time we met.

MAX: Tricky.

DOCTOR: Tricky?

MAX: Yes. You see, he's been dead for fifteen years.

[Part Two]

DOCTOR: Dead? You sure?

MAX: Look, Doctor. Business has been bad for all of us, but Talbot's pitch hasn't been touched for years. I can't remember the last time I saw him. I was probably still doing black-face variety on the beach then.

EVELYN: So why is the poster still here?

MAX: Well how do I know? Some sort of shrine or something. You know what sort of nutters these mystic people attracts.

DOCTOR: Oh, come now, Maxie. Brighton is a busy place with busy people. It's the height of the summer season, isn't it? Busy people wanting to fleece the busy tourists for as much money as possible. Why would anybody waste advertising space revealing the mystical qualities of a phantom Professor who isn't even open for business?

ALBERT: Did you say phantom?

DOCTOR: What of it?

ALBERT: Nothing really.

EMILY: It's Albert, sir. Always on about the phantom of Preston Park. Maybe this here Professor has come back from the grave.

DOCTOR: Nonsense. I don't hold with spirits and ghoulies and the like. Rattles and drums to keep the natives quiet.

MAX: Well, they do say that the Professor was here on pier ready for business on the very first day it

was open to the public.

DOCTOR: Now I know you're wrong. Who says such a thing? That Professor wasn't here in 1866, I can tell you that.

MAX: How'd you know?

DOCTOR: Er, I just know, that's all. And he wasn't here in 1907 either.

MAX: No, but I was.

DOCTOR: Well, do you remember him being here or not?

MAX: I was too busy chasing the girls, Doctor. All play and no work, you know what I mean? Now what was my interest in the future? I live for the present. I still do.

DOCTOR: Well, as far as I remember, there was no such pitch on the pier in my lifetime or anybody else's. He must have slipped through Time.

MAX: Well, I don't know about that, but old Talbot has been part of the fixtures round here as far as I can remember. Billy may know for certain. Where is he? Where's Billy gone?

DOCTOR: I thought he was with you.

(Running feet approach.)

BILLY: Blimey. Don't wait for anyone, will you?

DOCTOR: Sorry, I hadn't realised we'd lost you.

BILLY: You move pretty quick for an old'un, Doctor. I'm impressed.

DOCTOR: Oh, rigorous exercise, an occasional bath in sea water, and a lot of heart. But enough of that. What about this Professor Talbot?

BILLY: Talbot? Mind reader, mystic, dead for fifteen years. Not a lot to know, really.

DOCTOR: You see, I'm not convinced. Someone that is very much in Time, but isn't here all of the time. People disappearing under suspicious circumstances then, no doubt, reappearing again.

EVELYN: Doctor, you're not thinking what I'm thinking. Not Knox.

MAX: Whose that?

DOCTOR: No, Evelyn. It's not his style. It lacks that certain something, the flair for theatrics, the love of art for art's sake.

MAX: Who is this Knox chap anyway?

DOCTOR: Oh, no one you would know. Some so-called gentleman we met in Edinburgh once, a long time ago now.

MAX: Scotland, eh? Oh, I'll never play there. So why would they want to come and play here, I ask you. Why come and play down here? This is my turf.

DOCTOR: And at this precise moment in time, Maxie, the end of that pier is my turf.

MAX: Right, I'll lend you my red nose and big boots. But seriously, Doctor, you can't go gallivanting over the West Pier at this hour of the day. Be reasonable.

EVELYN: I wouldn't argue with him once his mind's made up.

MAX: Well, I don't fancy tip-toeing over waterlogged timber, thank you very much.

DOCTOR: Capital. Because I don't want you to come. None of you.

EVELYN: Now excuse me.

DOCTOR: None of you except Evelyn here.

EVELYN: I should think so.

DOCTOR: There are certain things in heaven, and certainly on Earth, that you, my friends, can never understand. Some fundamental shifts in the status quo that should never be experienced. They can warp your mind, alter your understanding, change you. Evelyn and I have had enough exposure to these goings-on. We are

EVELYN: Immune?

DOCTOR: If not immune, Evelyn, then assuredly used to the idea.

ALBERT: Well, I'm coming.

EMILY: No, you're not, Albert Potter. The very idea.

ALBERT: Quiet. Doctor, look, I could cover your back, yeah, and plug the bad guys full of lead.

DOCTOR: Ah. Or you could stay behind on the shore and protect your lady-love like any self-respecting matinee idol would do?

ALBERT: Don't he talk funny.

EMILY: Oh, I think he's sweet.

MAX: Yes, he's positively rotting my teeth.

TALBOT: No, that cannot be, your Eminence. No, no, I have been careful. No one suspects. You detect a threat to your survival? From these puny apes? Surely their intelligence cannot alter the course of history. They will face confusion. They will face mass loss. And then, with the merest of futile struggles, they will vanish into extinction. Isn't that historical? Isn't that the way it should be?

Please, trust me. Trust me when I say that no one will disturb your place of eternal rest. No one would dare.

EVELYN: I'd say that business isn't exactly booming.

DOCTOR: No, it does appear that the good Professor is closed for the season. The last few seasons, in fact. But I cannot accept the fact that he is dead.

EVELYN: Maybe just this once, Doctor, the locals know more about it than you do. Has that ever occurred to you?

DOCTOR: Never. I wonder if I

EVELYN: Couldn't you force the door off its hinges?

DOCTOR: What, break in like a common criminal? Please, Evelyn, give me some credit. Oh, none of that. Where there's a will, there's a way. Ah ha.

EVELYN: What?

DOCTOR: You see that crevice?

EVELYN: What crevice?

DOCTOR: There, look, there. Follow my finger. You see where the tide has gone out and left that cluster of rocks exposed?

EVELYN: Yes?

DOCTOR: Perfectly situated under this fortune-telling pitch. You know what that tells me?

EVELYN: That Talbot is about to meet a tall blond stranger.

DOCTOR: Exactly. Now, if I just scoot over this balcony and

EVELYN: Doctor! What are you doing?

DOCTOR: Can you think of a better way of getting down to the beach?

EVELYN: Frankly, yes.

DOCTOR: Yes?

EVELYN: Why don't we walk?

DOCTOR: Oh Evelyn, be reasonable. Look behind you. The rocks are partially exposed by the outgoing of the tide, but they're still surrounded by the ocean.

EVELYN: Max Miller's waving.

DOCTOR: Well, wave back, there's a good girl, while I go over.

EVELYN: Oh, Doctor, please. Isn't it frightfully dangerous? Didn't I read somewhere that it was frightfully dangerous?

DOCTOR: Evelyn, of course it's frightfully dangerous. If it wasn't frightfully dangerous everybody would be doing it, wouldn't they?

EVELYN: And?

DOCTOR: Not much of a secret hideout then, is it? Right, if I can just reach that protruding iron support, I'm home and dry, to coin a phrase.

TALBOT: No, the threat cannot be getting closer, your Eminence. Believe me, you are perfectly safe. Nothing could find its way in here. Nothing, I tell you.

(Door creaks open.)

DOCTOR: How sure are you, exactly?

TALBOT: How did you get in? Leave my premises at once, do you hear me? Get out of here!

DOCTOR: You know talking to yourself is the first sign of madness.

TALBOT: Oh, talking to myself, indeed.

DOCTOR: And answering those voices in your head is at least the fifth sign of insanity in my experience.

TALBOT: Do you hear them?

DOCTOR: Oh, all the time. Particularly when I get the uncontrollable urge to dominate humanity.

Funny, really. Oh, I'm the Doctor, by the way. I won't ask how you are. It's painfully obvious to me that you aren't well at all.

TALBOT: I

DOCTOR: Oh, do you mind? My friend is waiting outside, and it's not the sort of night one would want to leave your friend out in, now is it?

TALBOT: Friend?

DOCTOR: Yes.

TALBOT: Friend?

DOCTOR: Yes. A friend. Outside. Well, I'll just lift this, and unfasten this. Heavens, you are security conscious, aren't you? What have you got in here, the Crown Jewels?

TALBOT: I

DOCTOR: Oh no, you haven't, have you. Well, not the Crown Jewels. No, I would have heard of you, and I'm sorry to say that I've never heard of you.

TALBOT: Oh well, that's not surprising.

DOCTOR: No?

TALBOT: No. Shunned by the fraternity. Kicked out of the Magic Circle. Disowned by my profession.

DOCTOR: And dead for fifteen years, apparently.

TALBOT: Really? (laughs) Oh well, it is easier to forget me if they believe me dead. I should not be surprised.

DOCTOR: In fact, you just said that.

TALBOT: What?

DOCTOR: That it wasn't surprising.

TALBOT: And so it isn't. (laughs) Dead, indeed.

DOCTOR: Yes. The reports do seem to be a trifle premature.

EVELYN: Come on, Doctor. Open this door. I can hear you.

DOCTOR [OC]: And I can hear you.

EVELYN: This is no time for idle conversation, then, is it? Open the door.

DOCTOR [OC]: I'm trying.

EVELYN: Don't tempt me.

DOCTOR [OC]: Trying to open the door. That one and that, and yes, that should do it.

(Door opens.)

DOCTOR: Come in, Evelyn.

ALBERT: What can you see, Mister Miller?

MAX: Nothing, son. Nothing. The old girl was waving. She's a game old bird, isn't she? Never thought she would have it in her.

EMILY: What about the Doctor?

MAX: Can't see him, not any more. He seems to have vanished.

EMILY: Just like the others.

ALBERT: Not like the others, Em. You saw him clambering over the railings. He's casing the joint. Just wish I could have gone with him. How am I going to impress Warner Brothers if I just sit here on the beach all day?

MAX: Forget Warner Brothers, son. Like I told you. Here, wait a minute. Now look, will you look at that. There's the Doctor.

EMILY: What's wrong with him?

MAX: Nothing, sweetheart. Nothing. Look, he's walking back, isn't he. Now if he was running or limping, I'd be a bit more concerned, but he's walking back. It's a load of nothing, just like I thought it was. A load of nothing.

BILLY: Right as usual, Mister Miller.

EVELYN: What do you think you're doing?

DOCTOR: Just keep walking, Evelyn. Slowly. Don't worry, nothing will harm you.

EVELYN: Well, of course it won't harm us. You're not frightened of that old charlatan, are you?

Mumbo jumbo rhymes and fabricated flim-flam for tuppence a go? Oh, please.

DOCTOR: Fabricated flim-flam, that's absolutely right. Just keep believing that and keep walking. And don't look round. A nice steady pace and we'll be on the shore in no time. Is he still there?

EVELYN: You mean I can look round?

DOCTOR: Stop here for a moment and take a crafty peep, will you?

EVELYN: All right, all right. He's gone. What's the big scare all of a sudden? Anybody would think he's evil personified.

DOCTOR: Oh, Professor Talbot is fine, hasn't an evil bone in his body. Unfortunately it isn't bones that concern me at the moment. There's something in his mind.

EVELYN: Bats in the belfry, if you ask me.

DOCTOR: No, not bats, Evelyn. Something chilling, something uncanny. Something that shouldn't be there.

EVELYN: What this time?

DOCTOR: Oh, I don't know. But there's something not quite right about that man, you can tell. You look into somebody's eyes and can see

EVELYN: See what?

DOCTOR: Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Like the eyes of a dead fish, blank, no emotion.

EVELYN: Talbot seemed overly emotional to me.

DOCTOR: Yes, but it was all just surface. Underneath, in the soul, nothing.

EVELYN: If you say so. I think he's a complete lunatic, going on first impressions.

DOCTOR: Oh yes, first impressions. Not often the impressions to rely upon.

EVELYN: Well, I scarcely had a chance to make a second impression. You whisked me out of that place just as soon as you invited me in.

DOCTOR: I had to show him that we felt no fear.

EVELYN: I didn't.

DOCTOR: But I did. There was pure evil encased in that dwelling, that ramshackle, flea-bitten establishment. Pure concentrated evil. I felt it. I sensed it the moment I stepped into his domain.

EVELYN: Talbot seems fairly harmless to me. As mad as a bag of snakes, but fairly harmless for all that.

DOCTOR: That's the beauty of the whole situation, isn't it? That's why he's been chosen.

EVELYN: Chosen?

DOCTOR: Come on, let's get back to the others. I'm staying here tonight.

EVELYN: On the pier?

DOCTOR: No, on the beach. I need to keep an eye, or possibly two, on this place from a safe distance. It's ridiculous to risk any anything or any body until I know exactly what's going on here. This time that definitely includes everyone. That Albert wants to be a hero but I can't allow it, Evelyn. He's a boy. A child with no possible way of grasping the enormity of the evil that lurks back there. It must be destroyed. First it must be studied.

EVELYN: He seems a rather headstrong young man to me. What are you going to tell him?

DOCTOR: Oh, I'll tell him the impossible, something he can't possibly understand. I'll simply tell him the truth. It never fails in convincing this developing race that yours truly has stepped right out of Bedlam.

MAX: Hello, dearie. Thanks for the wave. Fair made my day, that did.

EVELYN: Yes, well, I mean, I was just letting you know that everything was all right. I was all right.

MAX: Yeah, you are that.

EMILY: So did you see anything, Doctor? Did you hear anything?

DOCTOR: Did you?

EMILY: No.

DOCTOR: So.

EMILY: Well, that's it, then. I knew you wouldn't believe me.

DOCTOR: On the contrary. I know you won't believe me.

ALBERT: Try us.

DOCTOR: First and foremost, I'm going to stay here tonight.

ALBERT: All night? Cor.

DOCTOR: Now this is no adventure, Albert. This is serious. That sound you heard earlier this evening. Describe it to me exactly, if you can.

EMILY: It was horrible, Doctor. Like a banshee, a scream from Hell.

DOCTOR: It was a scream, you're certain of that.

ALBERT: Oh yes, Doctor. But no human scream. It was loud. Not just loud like magnified, neither. It was loud, like all over. It was like it was coming out of the very ocean itself. A real bellow of a scream, not human at all.

MAX: Right, on that jolly note, I'll be off. I've got my public to think about. No good me rolling in at all hours pie-eyed, cross-eyed and petrified. I've got a warm meal and a bed waiting for me, so I'm off.

ALBERT: Well, I'm staying. What is it, Doctor? What do you reckon it is?

DOCTOR: I'm not entirely sure, Albert, but I can tell you this. Your town here, your green and pleasant land, your planet

BILLY: Planet?

DOCTOR: Your planet, it's under threat. A threat so great, so powerful, that mankind could crumble before its force.

MAX: He's a proper little H G Well, isn't he?

EVELYN: You have no idea.

TALBOT: What more could I do? What more could I do? I told him nothing, nothing at all. A strange man like that, breaking in without a by your leave, it's nothing. Meaningless. (hoarse) Meaningless? You incompetent fool. Of course it is not meaningless. This Doctor, he is a threat to me. He is a threat to my plans He must be eliminated, (normal) No. No, no more killing. I refuse. (hoarse) You refuse? You cannot refuse, you worm, you insect, you human. (normal) I will (hoarse) Nonsense. You know

what will happen if you continue to try and fight my desire, irksome creature. (normal) Argh, no. No more pain. I'll do it. I promise. I'll kill the Doctor, but I (hoarse) But? (normal) But I, but I'll need help. I can't do it without you. (hoarse) Of course. Of course. You will always need my help. Without my help, you are nothing. Now, be seated. Relax. You know how your irritation tires me so. Be calm, and be willing.

DOCTOR: All right, all right. Albert, if you stay here with me, you have to behave, be willing to take instruction, and understand me when I say this threat is real. It's a threat from another world, a world beyond your understanding.

ALBERT: Like Things To Come.

DOCTOR: Like Things To Come. But they are here already, and they can kill. Just you remember this isn't a film.

EMILY: Well, if Bert's staying then I'm staying too.

DOCTOR: Oh.

ALBERT: Come on, Em. This is me big chance.

DOCTOR: Albert.

ALBERT: I mean, this is important. This is man's work.

EVELYN: Welcome to the world of equality.

DOCTOR: Quiet, Evelyn. You can't stay.

EVELYN: I can't stay but this mere boy can, is that what you're saying?

DOCTOR: Please, this is important. You must go back to, back to the ship. Here, Evelyn, take the key.

EVELYN: But

DOCTOR: Don't argue, just take it. I don't need to tell you that you must guard it with your life, if you have to.

MAX: Too late, you've just told her. Quite a vessel your ship, eh, Doctor?

DOCTOR: She is that, quite a vessel. Oh, and Evelyn, take Maxie along, will you? It will be safer that way, believe me.

MAX: For who, exactly?

DOCTOR: For both of you.

MAX: You ain't met my old woman, Doctor. If I'm not back before midnight, there'll be all hell to pay.

DOCTOR: If we don't stop bickering and get going, by midnight Dante's Inferno may quite possibly have nothing on Brighton.

MAX: Right. Where is she moored then, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Moored?

MAX: This ship of yours.

DOCTOR: Oh.

EVELYN: I'll explain on the way.

MAX: Right-o. Billy. Billy boy, you coming then?

BILLY: Mister Miller, you can't be serious.

MAX: Don't follow you, old chum.

BILLY: And I can't follow you. You're not telling me that you're going along with all this alien creatures world domination Things To Come. It's all nuts!

MAX: Nuts it may be, Billy boy, but it beats going home, believe me.

BILLY: Well, you can count me out.

DOCTOR: Fine. Good. Glad you finally made up your mind. Now, can we be permitted to carry on now? We have an apocalyptic disaster to deal with.

BILLY: (distant) Nuts! You're all nuts!

ALBERT: Running away won't do you no good.

DOCTOR: Oh, I don't know. Perhaps I should have run away a bit more often. Then again, no, not me at all. Running away and everything? Not me at all.

TALBOT: So tell me, what do I have to do? (hoarse) Patience, minion. Have patience. We must first see the mettle of this Doctor. You will never get anywhere in life if you rush in. (normal) More haste less speed, are wise words, but futile. (hoarse) Futile? How dare you! Never take that tone with me. (normal) Oh, its just that this Doctor, he may not remain as harmless as he first appears to be. He may (hoarse) He may what, kill you? Oh dear, now that would be a great pity. (normal) A pity? (hoarse) Do not worry. I will continue. I will thrive. Without me, you are nothing. Without you, well, let us hope that we will never have to know. Enough now. Let the fun begin.

DOCTOR: Now just remember, this is no fun for me. This isn't a game, this is real life.

EMILY: Seems like pure fantasy to me. My mother always says

ALBERT: Oh, forget what your mother always says. She's never liked me anyway. Just because she don't reckon I can make it in the pictures.

EMILY: It's not that, Bert. I mean, well, all this. This is just too strange for me.

DOCTOR: My dear, if you really would rather go home, I can quite understand it.

EMILY: I'm going nowhere, Doctor. Can't you just bear with me for a bit? A girl can't talk quick enough to get all her words out. It's not fair.

DOCTOR: I apologise.

EMILY: I mean to say that Billy was right. Creatures from out of the unknown and all that, it's just strange.

DOCTOR: Very. I'm rather surprised at how calm you are about it, quite honestly.

EMILY: It's walking out with Albert here, Doctor. Life's just one long game of play-acting with him.

ALBERT: Life ain't a rehearsal, is it. You have to be prepared for the chances. I'm prepared.

Hollywood could call tomorrow, ain't that right, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Quite possibly. If I've learned anything through my lives and times, it's never take anything or any one for granted. You just never know when you might lose them.

EMILY: Don't worry. You have to take it as it comes, don't you. Life, I mean.

DOCTOR: Yes, Emily, that's right. Do you have any idea just how long it has been since I sat calmly and serenely, and simply basked in the sound of the ocean? A long time. A very long time indeed. I never just sit and listen. Listen. The highs and lows, the pleasures and woes. Everything subtle.

Everything gently shifting in the universe. Everything ticking within me, reverberating and nourishing. I'm the watchmaker: I regulate Time and there are so many faults, so many cogs that don't quite fit.

So many worlds that would shatter. So many lifeforms that could destroy everything, shatter the very fabric of Time. But here, as the ocean laps in and the ocean laps out, here beats real purity and honesty. A simple tide, uninterrupted.

(Unearthly roar.)

MAX: Lovely place, Miss Evelyn. Very nice indeed. You drag me all the way over here to see the Royal Pavilion's newly installed police box. Newly installed? Blimey, it looks like it's been dragged through a breaker's yard backwards, forwards and sideways.

EVELYN: It's certainly seen some action.

MAX: Haven't we all, girl? Haven't we all. Every bobby this side of Stoke Newington has used this thing, by the look of it.

EVELYN: Not quite. It's the Doctor's baby.

MAX: Oh? Well, remind me to wet its head when they open.

EVELYN: Now where did I put that key?

MAX: You'll be for it if the Doctor finds out. Trust it with your life, he said. A funny bloke.

EVELYN: Ah, there it is. Right, are you coming in or not?

MAX: Oh no, Miss, not for me. Never tamper with the property of the law, that's my motto. It doesn't seem right to trespass. Well, not with my reputation to think of.

EVELYN: Your reputation? The naughtiest man in Britain. My father used to say

MAX: Now, steady on, girl. I'm not that old, am I. Naughty but nice, that's me. Naughty but nice. I still don't know where this here ship of

(Tardis door opens.)

MAX: Lord preserve us.

EVELYN: Impressive, isn't it? Might take you a little while to get used to it.

MAX: But it's massive. Blimey, the Doctor must have frightful overheads. The rent on this place must go through the roof.

EVELYN: Fully paid for, as far as I know. Well, actually, when I come to think of it, I don't think it's paid for at all. Sort of on permanent loan to the Doctor from the land of his fathers, in a way.

MAX: You mean he pinched it. Oh, that's lovely. A stolen police box converted into, into something like the aquarium.

EVELYN: Aren't you going to go on about how it's bigger on the inside than the outside? It's a kind of tradition.

MAX: Listen, lady. I learnt long ago, never argue with whoever has the key. Get them doors shut.

There's a heck of a draught coming in from the street.

(Tardis door closes.)

MAX: So, Mrs Wells, this is your Time and Space machine, is it?

EVELYN: Well, I mean, how on Earth did you

MAX: I may be blue, lady, but I ain't stupid. Now, you don't get to talk with the Doctor's authority unless you have seen stuff. Seen some real stuff. He's been here, there, and everywhere. He steers a conversation through space creatures and the opening day of the West Pier. Well, either he's talking on the level or he's a complete nutcase. And he's patently not a complete nutcase.

EVELYN: Highly perceptive of you.

MAX: So, how many miles on the clock?

EMILY: Doctor, what is it? What is that scream?

DOCTOR: My wake-up call. Right, time enough to enjoy the scenery later, I think. This could very well be the show-stopper.

ALBERT: What shall I do?

DOCTOR: Stay here. How many more times? Be a hero, look after your lady.

EMILY: Yes, Bertie, please, do as he says. Stay with me.

ALBERT: But look, I want to help, I want to do something. I want to, I want to tell you that the pier's on fire!

DOCTOR: Fire? That's no fire. Some kind of pulsating light, some major energy force, coming from the end of the pier. Did you see that before? The last time you heard the scream, was the light there that time too?

ALBERT: I don't think so. I can't remember. Is it ghosts? Is it ghosts, Doctor? Phantoms from the sea?

DOCTOR: Oh, don't be ridiculous. I've told you, this is not of your world.

EMILY: Albert's told me all about it, Doctor. Don't be frightened.

DOCTOR: I'm not frightened. There is nothing supernatural about this.

EMILY: But there is. Albert's told me.

ALBERT: It's true, Doctor. All of it. Well, although I do make a few bits up.

EMILY: Oh, Albert!

ALBERT: Only here and there.

EMILY: Bert!

ALBERT: Add stuff to the stories I've heard. But my granny told me, told me stories of them lights. She saw them once. Very nearly scared her to death. Phantoms, she reckons. Phantoms of the lost souls at sea. Smugglers and pirates and that.

DOCTOR: Oh, no time for a paranormal debate now. I've got work to do. And don't follow me.

ALBERT: Of course, Doctor. I'll do the right thing and stay here. (sotto) Like hell I will.

EMILY: Albert, come back!

MAX: So, what are we supposed to do in here all night, then? Play cards?

EVELYN: Mister Miller, I

MAX: Maxie, please. No need to stand on ceremony.

EVELYN: Maxie, then.

MAX: That's it.

EVELYN: I've learnt the hard way. Never question the Doctor. He always comes through in the end.

MAX: Always?

EVELYN: He has so far. We'll just have to sit and wait.

MAX: Hmm. Yeah, very nice. Very nice, innit. All mod cons. Er, where's the little boy's room? I mean, you must have a little boy's room.

EVELYN: I've no idea. I've never had the need to use it.

MAX: No, right. Fair enough. Yeah, very nice, innit. Oh, very, very nice.

EVELYN: Look, will you sit down? You're making me nervous, prodding and poking all over the place.

MAX: I'm sorry, lady, I'm just having a nose, you know. You never know, I mean, maybe in thirty or forty years time we'll all have one of these.

EVELYN: I wouldn't bank on it if I were you.

MAX: No? So, tell me, what's it like where you come from then, eh? Or more to the point, when is it you come from? Am I still top of the bill at the London Palladium, eh? You won't answer. On second thoughts, lady, don't answer. I don't really want to know. Still, I've made my pile, I'm quite happy. I could go tomorrow. A nation mourns. Huh, that's a laugh, isn't it?

EVELYN: What is?

MAX: Well, there you sit, a lady from the future or some such place, and all I'm banging on about is my mortality. The life and death of yours truly. The nation's sorrow at the loss of a comic son. Ha. Not the important things at all.

EVELYN: No?

MAX: No. So, come on, lady, tell us. What horse wins the National in 1937?

EVELYN: How on Earth should I know? Oh, come on, settle down.

MAX: I want to know.

EVELYN: There's no use pondering on imponderables. It's simply a waste of time.

MAX: Oh, and you'd know all about that, wouldn't you, eh? All right, lady, all right. You win. Settle down. Right. I spy with my little eye something beginning with

DOCTOR: You idiot. What did I say?

ALBERT: I thought you were in trouble.

TALBOT: The understatement of the year, I would have thought.

DOCTOR: Talbot. Who are you? No, what are you?

TALBOT: I'm your worst nightmare.

DOCTOR: Huh, two out of ten for originality. But you have a nice location, I'll grant you that.

TALBOT: I am deadly serious, Doctor. I have powers beyond your wildest dreams.

DOCTOR: Oh. Again, not really getting above cliché here, Professor. As for my wildest dreams, you have no idea. I've tackled creatures beyond your imagination. Faced danger every day of my long, long existence.

ALBERT: Every day?

DOCTOR: Well, give or take.

TALBOT: Enough. This isn't a Sunday School trip to the seaside, Doctor. This is your destiny.

DOCTOR: Third strike. You are out, my friend. But you really should consider pantomime. You'd make a splendid demon king.

TALBOT: Enough! The demons grow stronger.

DOCTOR: There, told you.

TALBOT: The real demons, not your fire and brimstone novelties. The demons are strong. They grow more determined within me. You are a threat, Doctor. You must be eliminated.

DOCTOR: Oh. Do you know, if I had a penny for every time someone had said that to me, well, I would have an awful lot of pennies. So come on, Talbot, what is all this?

TALBOT: Domination, my dear Doctor. The rightful order of things being restored. My people have waited too long, far too long.

DOCTOR: Your people? What are you talking about, man? You're just some clapped-out old fortune teller with a decidedly shabby cloak, if I may say so. No decorum at all. I would imagine any people that would have appointed you as their leader would have to have been an extremely unsightly lot.

TALBOT: If it's propriety you want, Doctor, may I suggest you leave this place? Leave this place now for the love of everything you hold dear. Leave while you can! Leave while I allow it.

ALBERT: Come on, Doctor. Best do as the man says.

DOCTOR: Oh, a real hero you're turning out to be. Why, when I was your age, I

ALBERT: Doctor, look out!

DOCTOR: What?

ALBERT: The Professor, he's gone all funny like.

DOCTOR: Good gracious. Talbot. I say, Talbot, can you hear me? Can you understand me?

TALBOT: Leave!

DOCTOR: He's possessed. Completely taken over by something.

ALBERT: Stop him, Doctor. Stop him before he does something I'm going to regret.

DOCTOR: Don't you understand, Albert? This isn't just Talbot any more. His mind is being controlled.

The old Talbot is still there, the washed up charlatan, the so-called Professor that delighted gullible customers full of far too much candyfloss and an eagerness to believe. He thrilled them with second-hand predictions and mystic chants from the Far East. The far east of London, that is. That Professor is still in there somewhere, isn't he, Professor? There's also something else. Something

(Emily screams.)

ALBERT: Emily! Emily! The phantoms have got her.

DOCTOR: No, can't be phantoms. It can't be. Talbot is to blame. Or at least he's the host for an evil force so

ALBERT: Emily!

DOCTOR: Albert, come back here! It's no good.

ALBERT: Emily!

DOCTOR: You can't stop it alone.

ALBERT: (distant) Emily!

DOCTOR: Talbot. Talbot, snap out of it. Listen to me.

TALBOT: Doctor, why didn't you leave when we, when I gave you the chance? Heed my warning. Go.

DOCTOR: What's all this leave when we gave you the chance business? I don't take orders from people like you. People like those creatures that control you.

TALBOT: Silence, Doctor! You were warned. You must face the consequences.

ALBERT: (distant) Emily!

DOCTOR: What consequences? Talbot. Talbot? Where are you? Oh, forget fortune telling. I think illusionist is more in your line.

TALBOT: (nearby) Hardly an illusionist, Doctor. I'm not as dead as you think, you see. Oh ho, the magic of it all! I move from there to here in the blink of an eye. Or at least, in the confusion of a scream.

DOCTOR: You

TALBOT: I would go to Albert if I was you, Doctor. I'm not going, anyway. This is my home. Over yonder lies your future.

ALBERT: (distant) Doctor! Hurry! She's gone! Emily's gone!

DOCTOR: Oh, here we go again. (running) She can't just have vanished. I hope.

TALBOT: From the bowels of the sea, from the midst of Time and Space, from the darkest corner of human understanding I channel you, O Lord of Misrule. I have enlisted another human to do your bidding. Another insignificant creature to obey your thought through my thought. (hoarse) Indeed. And does this ape have a name? (normal) Well, I er, what does it matter, O Lord. She will do thy bidding. She will always be by your side. (hoarse) Ah, the female of the species. So much deadlier than the male, I'm told. Can she deal with this Doctor, I wonder? I have no doubt she can. Continue. (normal) I call upon your power. Your power for the true calling. Your power of the left-handed path. Human vessel, you who once had a will of thine own. Human vessel, list to me. List to me and obey. You must walk again, O little one. You must walk and attack and kill. Walk again. That's it. That's it. Try, try harder. Concentrate your mind. Move your body. Yes, walk and attack, and kill the Doctor. Walk, attack, kill. Walk, attack, kill. Walk, attack, kill.

ALBERT: What do you mean, she can't have just vanished? Of course she has. Look. Can you see her? Well, can you?

DOCTOR: Well, I admit I can't. But be rational, Albert.

ALBERT: Rational? What's her mother going to say? She don't much care for me anyway, but it's going to get a lot worse when she finds out that sea creatures got her daughter. You know what I mean?

DOCTOR: She may very well have gone home. She was frightened. I can't blame her, really.

ALBERT: Emily! There you are!

DOCTOR: Or she could have been hiding. I hate being right all the time, but one can't argue with the facts. Emily, I am very glad. Wait. Albert, come away from her.

ALBERT: But it's Emily.

DOCTOR: No, it isn't. Don't touch her. Whatever you do, don't touch her! Keep well away from her.

ALBERT: I think Billy was right. You're crackers. Look, it's Emily. My Emily.

DOCTOR: No, Albert, come back!

EMILY: Walk, attack, kill. Walk, attack, kill.

[Part Three]

ALBERT: Emily!

EMILY: Walk, attack, kill.

DOCTOR: Emily's dead.

ALBERT: Oh, for God's sake, what are you doing?

DOCTOR: That's the great thing about Earth beaches. Always plenty of hefty driftwood lying about. (Multiple thumps.)

EMILY: Walk, attack, kill.

ALBERT: Stop it!

DOCTOR: She's dead, I tell you. Emily is dead. Quick, we must get back to the Tardis. I don't think the driftwood is helping matters that much. Now! The Tardis!

ALBERT: What do you mean, she's dead? Look at her. It's my Emily.

DOCTOR: Your Emily is dead. Come on, we can run faster than it can. It's just beginning to learn to walk. I've had lots of practice in running.

EMILY: Walk, attack, kill. Walk, attack, kill.

MAX: S. S. Sole? No, no, I give up.

EVELYN: Sonic screwdriver.

MAX: A what what?

EVELYN: Sonic screwdriver. The Doctor used to call it his door key.

MAX: I was thinking I couldn't see a saucer of milk anywhere. No pets at all. All right, I'll let it go. Now my turn. I spy

EVELYN: No, wait. His door key. He's been an awfully long time.

MAX: So, Roedean girl? Getting lonely?

EVELYN: Ha, I wish I were. It's a good school.

MAX: With a very high wall. Believe me, I've tried it.

(Both laugh.)

EVELYN: No, but I have the key, you see. The sonic screwdriver went west years ago, apparently.

MAX: Went west? You mean you couldn't see it with your little eye? Not only are you spotting things I've never heard of, you're spotting things that aren't even in the room! What a cheat. Right, I'm deducting a point. Now what's the score?

EVELYN: How I should know?

MAX: You mean you haven't been keeping score? Then what's the point of playing?

EVELYN: Oh, Maxie, for Heaven's sake. The point is just to keep you still for a minute, that's all.

MAX: You called me Maxie. I think it's love.

EVELYN: Behave yourself, and listen.

MAX: I'm listening, I'm listening.

EVELYN: How's the Doctor going to get back in? I mean, if things turn nasty. I didn't think that Professor person looked like much of a threat. Bit shifty looking, perhaps, but nothing more than that.

MAX: So?

EVELYN: Well so, the Doctor wasn't so convinced. And when the Doctor's worried, I get worried. And he has been an awfully long time, and I've got the key.

MAX: Look, use your head. Now what do I do if I've lost my key? What does anybody do? They knock, don't they. First knock on that door, it's going to be the Doctor. Or a very confused copper. Now either way, we're as safe as houses.

EVELYN: It's not just an ordinary door, you know. This is a time machine.

MAX: Well, I know it's a time machine, but a door is a door is a door, isn't it, Isadora?

EVELYN: It's Evelyn. And no.

(Tardis door opens.)

DOCTOR: Albert, inside. Now.

(Tardis door closes.)

EVELYN: Oh, Doctor. I was just getting worried about you.

DOCTOR: And with very good reason, Evelyn. With very good reason.

EVELYN: Doctor, how did you get in here?

DOCTOR: My dear Evelyn, you don't think I've spent the best part of a millennium hurtling through Time and Space and never stopped off just once to get another key cut?

EVELYN: Oh, thank Heaven for that.

DOCTOR: Small mercies and suchlike. We really should grab hold of them and never let go.

MAX: So, what's cooking then, Doctor? Me and the lady here have been er twiddling our thumbs for an age, haven't we, girl? Here, talking of which. Where's your bird then?

ALBERT: He's left her, hasn't he. He left her alone, on the beach.

MAX: What?

ALBERT: Beating her around the head with a bit of wood like some sort of savage, he was.

EVELYN: It can't be true.

DOCTOR: Short of bombarding her with pebbles, I didn't have a lot more choice. Emily's body has been taken over, possessed by some sort of demonic force. The Emily we knew, well, she's dead, I'm afraid.

MAX: Never.

ALBERT: She can't be dead, Doctor. She can't. I mean, she was only eighteen. What's her mother going to say?

DOCTOR: Now listen. I'm sorry for your loss, but you really are going to have to pull yourself together. The whole human race is under threat, you know. It could be curtains for the lot of you if I can't think my way through all this nonsense.

MAX: Nonsense?

DOCTOR: This smokescreen. Talbot and this energy that's controlling him, they've conjured up some sort of Hall of Mirrors. Every time one looks into it there's nothing to see save your own warped

reflection.

ALBERT: I told you before, it's the phantoms. The phantoms of the oceans.

MAX: Well, he could be right, Doctor. I mean, spirits of ancient mariners, smugglers. The south coast is rife with tales of hauntings.

EVELYN: That's the daftest thing you've said all evening.

MAX: Oh, well, thank you very much. Anyway, it's true. I mean, all this science fiction lark, I'm not knocking it all, Doctor. Not knocking it at all. It's very impressive. But have you ever stopped to think, maybe here and now, Brighton in the Year of Our Lord 1936, maybe there's a perfectly reasonable explanation after all, eh?

DOCTOR: 1936! Of course! When did you say Talbot, well, vanished from the social calendar as it were?

MAX: Oh, now you're asking. Well, must be fifteen years ago at least.

DOCTOR: Ah.

MAX: Simply shut up shop and was never heard of again. His pitch was boarded up and left. It must have had some long-term lease or something, or else his family kept it as a shrine to him. You know how families can be sometimes.

DOCTOR: Yes.

MAX: Anyway, no one was allowed in. Out of respect for the dearly departed, I'm guessing.

DOCTOR: Only he wasn't so dearly departed, was he? And this was fifteen years ago?

MAX: Give or take.

EVELYN: Soon after the First World War had come to an end, in fact.

MAX: The First World War? Oh, you mean the Great War. Yes, well, it would have been around that time. Here, don't tell me they're going to have a rematch. Don't they ever learn?

DOCTOR: No, Mister Miller, I'm terribly afraid that they don't.

EVELYN: So what is it, Doctor? Negative energy created by the people for the people?

DOCTOR: No, it's nothing as tangible as that, I fear. This is some alien evil, some malevolent power obviously attracted by our friend Talbot's twisted sorcerous leanings. Or perhaps even attracted by the concentration of happy human emotions that have seeped into that pier's structure over the years. Every rosy-cheeked infant chomping on a toffee apple, every pretty coloured balloon or goldfish won by the toss of a hoop on a hoopla stall. Minuscule and inconsequential pleasures, ephemera of the mind that flash brightly for an instant and are then forgotten. But that old pier doesn't forget. Every moment of joy she gives is returned in human energy and stored in her structure, stored in her heart. Perhaps that attracted this disgusting presence.

EVELYN: You mean for every positive emotion there must be an equal negative counterbalance?

DOCTOR: In a way, yes, Evelyn. There's nothing evil likes better than a slab of goodness to feast upon. Tonight, alas, it has sated its appetite upon Emily.

ALBERT: What's the war got to do with it?

DOCTOR: I would imagine that by 1918 with the glory of the Armistice, the evil that smouldered under that pier was capped. Far too much goodness can cool the ardour of despair. A little bit of happiness, a brief moment of joy, that's one thing. But a universal sigh of relief, a species in celebration? Very powerful. Evil hates that. It was blotted out by the overbearing euphoric blast of a world at peace at last. A lot of men died, Mister Miller.

MAX: I know. I know. Some of my best pals amongst them.

DOCTOR: Yes. A lot of death, human misery, human despair. Even on that pleasure dome of a pier, not many laughs through those four years.

MAX: Not many at all.

DOCTOR: Allowing that evil force to strengthen and grow. Evil may like to toy with goodness once in a while, but pure human misery is like a full recharge of its battery. I think it's been biding its time, waiting for the right moment in world history to take full control..

ALBERT: Another war?

DOCTOR: Another war. Exactly, Albert. And it will be longer than before, with a rather nasty sting in its tail.

EVELYN: Oh Doctor, you can't tell

DOCTOR: No, no, I can't. Suffice to say, gentlemen, that the world will never be the same again. A cloud of despair will hang over it long after the peace treaties have been signed. From the moment the end comes, the human race will know it isn't the end, but a new beginning. A new beginning of suspicion. You will always live in fear of complete destruction. Exactly the kind of atmosphere our friend under the pier will relish.

EVELYN: So what are you saying? Both evil and good emotions act like an afternoon snack for this thing?

DOCTOR: In a way. It's a storage unit, a vessel that channels human feelings for its own good. It takes the wheat from the chaff, it picks and chooses, but in the end it survives through emotional turmoil. The human spirit is its fuel, its source of energy.

MAX: So, if that's the case, if it needs us, then we in turn can destroy it.

DOCTOR: In theory, yes. As I remember, this has been here a very long time. Do you remember strange goings-on in 1918?

MAX: Not really.

DOCTOR: No. But I do. Or at the very least, I've read about them. Now let me see.

ALBERT: Doctor, please! Can you rifle through your no doubt impressive library later? This is a matter of life and death. We must go back and rescue Emily.

DOCTOR: Pointless.

EVELYN: Oh Doctor, don't you think we should go back and see if we can do something? You do, don't you?

DOCTOR: Oh, very well, if it will make you happy. Just don't spread any of that human compassion about when we get on the pier. It could have severe ramifications for all of us. Even me.

TALBOT: I trust you, O Malevolent One. I do trust you and I would never disobey your ruling. I'm your slave. A slave for as long as you want me, content to bask in your favour, your darkness, your truth. (hoarse) And what of the girl? (normal) The girl? (hoarse) Don't get coy with me, Talbot. The girl. The newest addition to our collection of willing tools. (normal) Well, I, I seem to have lost connection with her, her. (hoarse) Say it, Talbot. (normal) Her spirit. (hoarse) That's right. She still has one, just about. Suffice it to say it is *my* spirit, a soupçon of my essence. Just a loan. (normal) I, I've lost the connection. (hoarse) Pity. Ah, but no matter, it's only matter. Plenty more where that came from, is there not? Plenty more.

(On the beach.)

MAX: This was the spot, wasn't it? Oh, I do like to be beside the seaside. It's such a lovely night for a stroll, isn't it, Doctor? That was ironic, by the way.

DOCTOR: I've seen it worse, a lot worse.

MAX: Oh? When was that? Before my time, I suppose.

DOCTOR: No, after it, actually, and it's just as far away.

EVELYN: What's that on the beach?

ALBERT: Emily. Emily!

DOCTOR: Albert, Evelyn, stay close by my side. Don't run to her. It isn't her, not any more.

MAX: Well, it looks like her, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Yes. Yes, as a matter of fact, it does. It looks like her again, in a way. Could be a trick of the light. Could be, oh, come on. But don't touch her. Whatever you do, don't touch. She could still be infected. Could still be in her system, shrouded by Talbot's cack-handed sorcery.

ALBERT: Em, wake up. Em!

EVELYN: Is she, is she dead?

DOCTOR: Yes. I'm rather pleased to say she is.

MAX: Pleased? What sort of a nut are you? I think Billy was right.

DOCTOR: I'm pleased, Max, because she is at peace. Look, Albert, look.

ALBERT: It's my Em.

EVELYN: Doctor, are you certain?

DOCTOR: Yes. Before, she was different, totally different. Possessed, like a zombie. A walking corpse with no will of her own. She's been dead for hours, but now she really is dead, free of the evil that had overtaken her. The evil that wanted to destroy me.

ALBERT: Can't you do anything, Doctor? Is there no medicine, nothing you can give her?

DOCTOR: I'm so sorry, Albert. No medicine can help her now.

ALBERT: I've seen it. I mean, I've seen it at the pictures. You know, with a bit of electricity and a dab of serum. I've seen 'em. Lionel Atwill, Bela Lugosi, they can work miracles.

DOCTOR: In films, Albert. In films. Here and now, this is reality. This is your reality. And Emily is dead.

EVELYN: What happened?

DOCTOR: I would imagine that whatever is lurking under that pier attacked her on the beach, tempted her towards the water's edge, lured her away from safety somehow, and then killed her. But her will must have been strong. Oh, she was affected by the power for a time, willing to take instructions and attack me, but she clearly didn't follow them. She lies on the exact spot where we left her.

ALBERT: Where you beat her down, you mean.

DOCTOR: Yes, Albert, where I beat her down. But she never fell when I hit her. My blows didn't harm her. Look, no bruises. You can't bruise a corpse.

MAX: She really was dead when she tried to attack you?

DOCTOR: Yes, dead and possessed by evil. Her goodness won through, Albert. Don't you understand? Her goodness was too strong to remain trapped forever. Her spirit was intact while the invasion of her mind was going on. In the battle of wits that resulted, the true Emily won.

ALBERT: So why did she die? Why did she have to die?

DOCTOR: The shock must have been too great. Her spirit may have been strong, but the body is weak, Albert. Mortal flesh and blood can only stand so much. Emily used every morsel of her heart and soul to save herself. To save me, and you.

TALBOT: (hoarse) And what of the Doctor? What of the Doctor? (normal) Well, I, I would imagine that our young lady despatched him with very little effort. (hoarse) You would imagine? Find out, you miserable worm. Find out! (normal) I, I will, O Lord, I, I swear it, but please, I beseech you, let me rest. (hoarse) You have no need for rest. No time. When the Earth is suitably cowed, when our calling has been fulfilled, then, Talbot, then you can rest. You can rest for as long as you want. (normal) Thank you. Oh, thank you. Just a little peace, a little respect, a little love. Tell me again, O Anointed One, tell me of the paradise that awaits. (hoarse) It will be peaceful. You will have respect. You will have love. But most of all, you will have power. The power of the Chosen One, the power of a demigod. I will nurture you and cherish you and protect you, my faithful Chosen One. The one who will destroy his own kind for an eternity of er, well, of er. What do you want? (normal) Oh, position. I want to have position. (hoarse) And so you shall. So you shall.

EVELYN: Stop. Stop, wait a minute.

DOCTOR: What is it?

EVELYN: Got a pebble in my shoe.

MAX: And rocks in your head. Now come on.

EVELYN: Do you mind?

MAX: Well, what sort of shoes are those to wear on Brighton beach, I ask you? They'll be scuffed to Kingdom Come by the morning.

EVELYN: I'll have you know these shoes have stood me in good stead for many a year.

MAX: I believe you. I believe you. Now stop bleating and help me with this door.

DOCTOR: Are you sure you should be doing this?

MAX: Well, of course I should. It'll be fine. I'm Maxie, Brighton's favourite son. Besides, Charlie's a mate of mine. This here row boat, it's not his best, not his pride and joy as it were, just an old tub he keeps for sentimental reasons.

(Undoes chain and opens door while speaking.)

DOCTOR: As long as you're sure.

MAX: Look. Look, if it'll put your mind at rest, I'll leave him a little something. How's that? Just a little something, you know. Now, hold hard a minute. Where did I put it? No. Back pocket? No. Oh, don't say I left it in my stage suit. No, no, here, it's all right, all right. Here it is. Right. Pay to the bearer, what do you reckon, a fiver? Does that sound fair?

DOCTOR: Oh, very fair, I should say.

MAX: Right. Five pounds only, signed Max Miller.

EVELYN: And they said you were mean.

MAX: Oh, it's all right, lady. He won't cash it, will he. He'll be able to dine out on the fact that he got a cheque from me. He'll be able to dine out for a month on that, I'm telling you.

DOCTOR: You are a very clever boy, Maxie.

MAX: Doctor, you have no idea. No idea at all. Right, who can steer this thing anyway?

TALBOT: But will I have true love, master? Master? (hoarse) Quiet, you fool. Somebody is approaching. I can almost smell the humanity.

ALBERT [OC]: Come on, open this door! I know you're in there. Open up!

TALBOT: Wait.

ALBERT [OC]: I'll break it in.

TALBOT: Just wait a moment.

ALBERT [OC]: I will break the door down, no word of a lie.

TALBOT: If you'll just please wait just a

ALBERT [OC]: I will!

TALBOT: No, please, I'll open the door. I'll open the door, I swear. (opens door) What is it? Oh. Oh,

it's you, is it?

ALBERT: She's dead.

(Closes door.)

TALBOT: To whom are you referring, young man?

ALBERT: You know damn well. My Em. My Emily. She's gone, and you took her. You!

TALBOT: Now, calm down, please. Calm down. I've done nothing wrong.

ALBERT: It's all you. You and that Doctor. Everything was all right

TALBOT: Everything was all right before he turned up, indeed. I fail to see what my involvement could possibly be in your tragedy. You have my sincere condolences, of course, but I am powerless, at the moment.

ALBERT: What do you mean, at the moment?

TALBOT: Well, everything comes to those who wait, so they say. You just have to have faith. Faith in the right oracles, that's all.

ALBERT: Faith?

TALBOT: Oh yes. Why not take a seat, young man. Rest yourself and indulge a misunderstood man in some interesting conversation.

ALBERT: Oh, I dunno.

TALBOT: It will be worth your while, I can assure you.

MAX: I thought you said you could steer this thing.

DOCTOR: All I said was a ship is a ship is a ship. It can't be that difficult. Besides, you're the one from the island nation, not me.

MAX: Don't you worry about me, mate. I can handle myself in a boat. I can handle anything in a boat, come to that.

EVELYN: Mister Miller, would you kindly restrain yourself.

MAX: Sorry, lady. I just couldn't help myself.

EVELYN: That's just the trouble, you always seem to be helping yourself, if you ask me.

DOCTOR: Evelyn, please, leave Maxie alone.

EVELYN: Me? Well, I like that.

DOCTOR: And Maxie, before we succumb to the temptation of indulging in music hall banter

MAX: Too late.

DOCTOR: Shall we get down to the business in hand?

MAX: Suits me, Doctor. I'm merely here to please. What about if I try and moor her at the end of the pier, just where the bathing arena starts. That'll give you a chance to take a look down into Davy Jones' locker, right?

DOCTOR: Wrong. I don't want to stay around here any longer than we have to. Mooring the boat will waste precious time and besides, it would severely hamper our chance of a hasty exit, should the need arise. No, just try and keep her steady as we approach Talbot's pitch.

MAX: Well, I'll do my level best, Doctor.

EVELYN: And he meant the boat, all right?

MAX: I know, I know. Some people. You're the kind that get me a bad name, do you know that, girl?

EVELYN: Oh, hardly.

MAX: Beautiful, isn't it?

EVELYN: What is?

MAX: The windmill. Do you see it, over at Rottingdean there. These clear nights you can see for miles. A beautiful sight, innit?

EVELYN: Lovely.

MAX: I mean, who wants to stay in London when you can come home to a sight like that.

EVELYN: Is that what you always say to your wife, you charmer you?

MAX: No, London's not for me, lady. You can keep your bright lights and fast ladies, and your fast lights and bright ladies, come to that. No, you can't beat good old Sussex by the sea.

EVELYN: You're just like the Doctor.

MAX: Why?

EVELYN: You're just like the Doctor, Mister Miller, because you never listen unless it is you who are talking.

MAX: Well, that is nice, isn't it, eh? I come out here, brass monkey weather in a leaky old tub, and that's the gratitude?

DOCTOR: I thought you said it was a lovely night.

MAX: Yeah, well, I did, but, well, I'd much rather be enjoying it from the comfort of me own bed. Well, who wouldn't? I'm only human.

DOCTOR: Ah. And there's the difference. Right, settle down now. Just keep her steady here.

EVELYN: Doctor, what's that?

MAX: Looks like the Northern Lights have taken their holidays down south.

DOCTOR: Not quite. I've seen that pale glow before.

MAX: Where?

DOCTOR: Our poor, unfortunate friend Emily was radiating that glow just after she was, well, you know.

EVELYN: That's bad, isn't it?

DOCTOR: Yes, Evelyn, it's bad. Seems to be connected to the seabed here, clamped onto this cluster of rocks like a limpet. Some sort of energy.

MAX: What is it?

DOCTOR: Alien, certainly. Evil, undoubtedly.

MAX: Dangerous?

DOCTOR: Unutterably.

EVELYN: Is it safe to stick around here then, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Probably not, but I'm afraid we have no choice. If I'm to vanquish this abomination I must know what it is.

MAX: Is it my imagination

DOCTOR: What?

MAX: Or is what it is getting bigger?

DOCTOR: Yes, the mass does seem to be increasing, certainly.

EVELYN: And that glow is getting stronger.

DOCTOR: Perhaps it would be wiser to get us back to the shore, Maxie. Plant our feet on terra firma and see what develops.

MAX: And the firmer the better, for me..

MAX: Here, give the oars to me. Give the oars to me.

EVELYN: There's no need to snatch. It's just she won't move.

DOCTOR: Nonsense.

MAX: Well, either she's wrong, Doctor, or I've become as weak as a kitten. Look, the moment the oars hit the water all the strength seems to be sapped out

DOCTOR: Oh, let me try. Hurry, man.

MAX: Well, be my guest.

DOCTOR: Oh, ah. Yes, there's obviously some sort of forcefield at work here, holding us back.

EVELYN: Or dragging us down. Don't you feel it?

MAX: Yes, she's right. We do seem rather low in the water. It's sucking us down, Doctor. I'm telling you, it's sucking us down. Women and comics first!

DOCTOR: How's that. Any improvement?

MAX: Well, we're moving all right, but in the wrong direction.

EVELYN: My head feels so heavy, so full. It's like a flock of starlings have made a home in it, spinning and chirping and whispering and yes, yes, I understand.

DOCTOR: Evelyn, concentrate. Don't let it in, Evelyn. Don't let it in. Block it out. Think tangible thoughts. Think of the Tardis, remember the Silurians, anything. Remember me.

MAX: I don't know how much I had to drink tonight, but there must have been a dodgy pint in there somewhere.

DOCTOR: Listen, Maxie, don't give up.

MAX: Oh dear.

DOCTOR: Remember who you are. Remember what we're doing here. Remember the jokes. You don't want Tommy Trinder to get all the laughs, now do you? Here, take over with the oars.

MAX: Yes. Yes, I understand.

DOCTOR: Take the oars, now.

MAX: What? Oh right, yeah, right, the oars, yeah. Yeah, I've got you. The oars. I'll try my best, Doctor, but I'm struggling here. I'm struggling.

MAX + EVELYN: Kill the Doctor. Kill the Doctor.

DOCTOR: Concentrate. I command you to concentrate. Stop, think. Think what you're doing. Evelyn, Maxie, for the love of everything you hold dear, remember! Remember. No! No, you can't control me. I won't succumb to you. Everything else might very well succumb but not me. I am a Doctor. I am more powerful than you. I will destroy you. One day, one day soon, you will succumb to me. No! No, you will succumb to *me*.

MAX + EVELYN: I must destroy you.

DOCTOR: No!

(Splash!)

[Part Four]

(In the Tardis.)

EVELYN: He's still unconscious, but the colour's coming back.

MAX: Which colour? I didn't like all that green glow look he had going on. Very unpleasant. Mind you, my head's a lot clearer, and for that you have to thank the bloke, nut though he may be.

EVELYN: Yes, be thankful, so less of the nut in future, all right?

MAX: Sorry, but come on, be fair, lady. What sort of a nut dives into the ocean knowing full well that some green alien forcefield is right below the surface? Cold madness must have taken control.

EVELYN: Or blind heroics. It isn't the first time the Doctor's put his own life in danger for me. He's done it dozens of times. A very brave man lies before you, Mister Miller, and don't you forget it.

MAX: Oh, I know. Well, fair does and all that. We all played our part, you know.

EVELYN: We were both playing mindless zombie creatures hell-bent on killing the Doctor, as far as I understand. I don't really think we helped matters much. And thank you very much for what you did. I just hope the Doctor will be able to thank you in person.

MAX: Yeah, rather you than me, mate, that's for sure. Rather you than me. Right, anyway, I can't stand around here all night. I'll bid you a fond farewell.

EVELYN: And where do you think you're going?

MAX: Well, he's home, isn't he? What more do you want me to do? Blimey, can't you just pull out the throttle and get this here spaceship of yours whizzing through the atmosphere and away from all this lot?

EVELYN: And leave you and this planet to defend itself?

MAX: Well.

EVELYN: You really must be joking. Look, the Doctor was seriously concerned. He almost died trying to save us. I think we owe him a little patience, a little more time.

DOCTOR: Metal. Metal fatigue. Severe metal fatigue.

MAX: Oi, oi, Doctor. Doctor, come along, man. How many fingers am I holding up?

EVELYN: Don't be so disgusting.

(That'll be two fingers, then.)

MAX: No, I mean, I'm only trying to help. Get those old peepers in focus, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Eh?

MAX: You're the hero of the hour, and time's a-wasting to finish the job. Come on, up on your feet.

DOCTOR: Ah, metal fatigue.

MAX: That's right, mate. What's he talking about?

EVELYN: I've no idea.

TALBOT: Oh, but I do.

MAX: Oh, you do talk, then. Blimey, right man of mystery we've got here.

DOCTOR: No, don't touch me. Leave me to rest. Don't touch me. Metal fatigue.

MAX: Come on then, clever clogs, what's he talking about? Oh, the strong and silent type again, are we? I don't really care that much anyway, mate, so keep your little secrets. The Doctor's all right now. He'll sort everything.

EVELYN: Doctor. Doctor. Come back to us. You're safe. We're in the Tardis. Nothing's going to hurt us here. We're all of us all right.

DOCTOR: All right. All all right. Don't touch me. Evelyn.

EVELYN: Yes.

DOCTOR: Evelyn. Oh, there you are. And Maxie.

MAX: Yes.

DOCTOR: Thought I'd cashed in my chips that time.

TALBOT: A gambling man, I see.

DOCTOR: Talbot, get away from me. I will defeat your master.

EVELYN: Doctor, calm down. It was Talbot who got you back to the Tardis.

DOCTOR: You did?

TALBOT: At your service.

DOCTOR: Evelyn, get him out of my Tardis. There's no telling what damage he could do. How could you have invited him in? How could you?

EVELYN: But I had no choice. You said yourself.

DOCTOR: What did I say?

MAX: That we shouldn't touch you with a barge pole. And believe me, I wouldn't.

DOCTOR: And I'm mighty glad you didn't. If you had done, you'd have been affected like I was. Like poor Emily. Luckily I have a much more complex metabolism than her. Than all of you, in fact.

TALBOT: Except me.

DOCTOR: You are a slave to the energy. You are possessed by its power.

TALBOT: I'm invigorated by its power, Doctor. I'm an immortal. And you could be, too.

DOCTOR: Oh please, you haven't fallen for that old line, have you? It's the oldest trick in the book.

MAX: In the white book or the blue book?

EVELYN: Probably both of them, I should think.

DOCTOR: You have been taken in, Talbot. This evil has fooled you. Oh, I'm sure it's promised you untold power, or wealth, or love, or any one of the hundreds of pleasures that flesh is prey to. You are nothing like me, and don't try and brainwash yourself into thinking you are. You are a mere instrument, a plaything for that force that has latched on to the pier. And don't think you can trust it. It will drop you. As soon as it's strong enough, it will drop you. Well, don't you understand, man? The future of your people, your true people, is in your hands. And mind. This false friend will let you down, believe me.

TALBOT: I think not. This is real. I can feel it, the power. I can hear its voice.

DOCTOR: And you can be manipulated into doing its bidding.

TALBOT: Not true, Doctor. Not true.

DOCTOR: Really?

TALBOT: Yes, really. Why, pray, would I risk my reward in order to assist you? Answer me that.

DOCTOR: Truthfully, I can't.

TALBOT: Because I am a human being, Doctor. Maybe not a particularly caring one in your eyes, but a human being nonetheless. Call me old-fashioned, but I couldn't bear to stand back and see you die.

DOCTOR: How generous of you.

TALBOT: And you have an admirer in that young man of yours.

DOCTOR: Albert?

EVELYN: Yes, where is Albert?

MAX: Quite honestly, he's been the least of my worries tonight.

TALBOT: Oh, Albert is safe and well. He was tending to the body of his dear departed. A great pity, that. She could have proved very useful. But like me, a little humanity goes a long way. We are not monsters, Doctor. Not monsters at all. We are gods. Gods in waiting, if you like. What about you, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Oh, you talk the talk, Talbot, but can you walk the walk? That's what I want to know.

MAX: Oh, knock his block off, Doctor. He's beginning to annoy me.

DOCTOR: No violence, please, Maxie. It's what his sort thrive upon. We are both civilised men, I hope?

TALBOT: Naturally.

MAX: But you are a slightly redundant one, I would have thought.

EVELYN: How'd you mean?

TALBOT: Yes, clown. What are you talking about?

MAX: Well, if I was a big bad alien force from another time loop, or whatever it is, I certainly wouldn't want one of my human minions hob-nobbing with the good Doctor here. It's like batting for the other side, if you follow me.

DOCTOR: The clown has a good point there, Talbot. I wouldn't give you a brass farthing for your chances now.

MAX: No, you don't have a snowball's chance in Hell of reaching any position of authority, if you ask me.

TALBOT: Oh, please, what do you know of position. I am Professor Talbot. I've forgotten more about the black arts, mysticism, and the power of the mind than you or anybody else will ever know. I can string along a green blob from outer space without breaking sweat.

DOCTOR: Oh, listen to yourself, Talbot. I've remembered every green blob from outer space that I've ever encountered.

EVELYN: And there's been a few.

MAX: There has?

DOCTOR: Believe me, there has indeed, and I'm telling you, Talbot, each and every one of them would have swallowed your dubious grey matter for breakfast. The energy that has neatly nestled itself at the bottom of your pier is not to be trifled with. Trust me for once. Trust me when I say it is pure evil. And if anybody's been played for a fool around here, it isn't your master under the water.

MAX: So, what are you going to tell the green man, then, Professor? You just popped round here for some after hours tea and crumpets.

TALBOT: Oh, it's so simple it's terrifying. The so-called Great One, my sickly benefactor, he wants you dead, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Oh, he's not the only one, I can assure you.

TALBOT: I'll walk out of this machine, head held high. I'll tell them that I saved you in order to destroy you.

MAX: To be honest, if I was an alien from outer space, I wouldn't buy that as an argument.

EVELYN: Nor me, actually.

TALBOT: Your mind is strong, Doctor. I readily admit that. Too strong for my friends to conquer. You would not have yielded to our will. You may not even have died. You may have survived and grown stronger. For me, I believe you would have died.

DOCTOR: Don't be so sure, Talbot.

TALBOT: No, no, believe me, you would have died. The newspapers are publishing all sorts of weird and wonderful lurid tales at the moment. A washed-up body on the beach might have been swept up with the rest of the hysteria. But then again, it might not.

MAX: Hold on a mo'. You said them. I thought there was just one evil entity down there.

TALBOT: Oh my dear Mister Miller, you really should stick to playing con-men on the silver screen. I fear you are too naïve for this modern age.

MAX: Now listen to me

TALBOT: No, you listen for once. When they arrived, centuries ago, they were exiles. Exiles from the furthest reaches of the galaxy. They were frightened, they were homeless, they were desperate.

MAX: They were green all over.

DOCTOR: And so they became parasites on Earth, sucking the population of emotional energy.

TALBOT: It was a necessity. Their home planet of Indo had been invaded by an alien race. The creatures of Indo in turn needed to find a home.

DOCTOR: Do unto others and you had done unto you, is that it? Very civilised.

TALBOT: What more could they do? And so, in the meteorite that crashed into British waters, the entire population of Indo resided, microcosmically speaking. An entire species, now clinging on to life like

DOCTOR: Intergalactic frogspawn?

TALBOT: Er, quite.

DOCTOR: Yes, well, that's all very tragic but I'm afraid that I can't condone their behaviour. Their power must be controlled before they infect the entire population of this planet. And these poor creatures, these humans, these precious few, they don't have the knowledge or experience to escape to another place to live. They will fight and die for their right to stay here, and I will fight and die alongside them if I have to.

MAX: He's very good, isn't he?

EVELYN: Good? Oh, he's fantastic.

TALBOT: But not quite good enough, I fear. I shall return to my friends

DOCTOR: And tell them all about it, no doubt.

TALBOT: And tell them nothing. I know exactly which side of the bread is buttered in this situation, Doctor. I like calm waters below me. That's the secret of dealing with these creatures. As few ripples as possible. I shall tell them that I have brought you back to your rightful place, your spaceship here, and that I have sabotaged said ship. Upon your first attempt at leaving, it will self-destruct. Simple.

EVELYN: It won't, will it?

DOCTOR: Of course not. She wouldn't let somebody like that tamper with her equipment.

TALBOT: True. I couldn't, and indeed, wouldn't have tampered with your ship. You must learn to trust me. Anyway, I for one am rather looking forward to the final act. Toodle-pip.

ALBERT: Must tell the Doctor. I must tell the Doctor Emily's safe. Well, she can't come to any more harm, I realise that now. I still don't know what her mother's going to say. Emily's very still, and her mother won't find her in the shed, now, will she? It was always her old man who used to do the fixing of lights and painting of doors in her house. Nowadays old Mrs Bung, she gets a little man in to do that sort of thing, ever since her old man kicked the bucket. She gets a bloke in, you know, down from Hove, just along from the bandstand there, remember? Jimmy Jones, that was him, yeah, Jones. Jones the brush they used to call him. Welsh, I reckon. Anyway, Emily will be safe at home. I'll explain later, when me head don't ache as much. Then I'll explain. I mean, what a night. What more could happen? Nothing, that's what I'm hoping. Absolutely nothing.

MAX: If you ask me, there's something not very trustworthy about that man Talbot.

EVELYN: That's the understatement of the year.

DOCTOR: Oh Evelyn, you really need to know your enemy in these situations. Talbot is as terrified as anybody else, I can tell.

EVELYN: He seemed pretty confident to me.

MAX: Yeah.

DOCTOR: What? All the evil mastermind patter, sheer hocus-pocus. I rather think Talbot knows me like I know him. He's no fool. Why bring me back? Why save us all? The force is getting too great for him. He needs help. Yes, know your enemy, but more than that you need to know your friends.

MAX: Too right.

DOCTOR: A short trip, I think, just to keep her ticking over.

EVELYN: Are you sure?

DOCTOR: I need to know she's in full working order.

EVELYN: But what if he *has* done something? Maxie and I, we weren't exactly in rude health when we got back here, you know. Talbot had plenty of time to settle you down and rip out a few wires here and there. Wouldn't it be best to have a tinker under the console?

DOCTOR: Oh, no time for tinkering, Evelyn. No time at all. Hold tight. Just in case, you know.

ALBERT: Soon as I find the Doctor, then I can explain. I can put things right. I think I should have kept my big mouth shut.

(The Tardis materialises.)

ALBERT: All right, Talbot, I'm ready for your next box of tricks. Zombies, vampires, even a werewolf. I can face anything.

(Tardis door opens.)

DOCTOR: Hello.

ALBERT: Oh, Doctor. You didn't half give me a turn. What's this?

DOCTOR: This is my home, and here are my house guests.

MAX: Blimey, look at that.

EVELYN: What?

(Tardis door closes.)

MAX: It's the old Theatre Royal. Well, bless my soul. We were outside the Pavilion, now we're outside the Royal. If I didn't believe it, I wouldn't believe it. You ever thought about going on the Halls, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Unfair advantage.

MAX: No such thing. Get yourself a good agent, you'll clean up, you will. I can sort you out a very attractive assistant.

EVELYN: I shall ignore that remark.

MAX: No, but seriously, Doctor, I can get you a very attractive girl. Pretty as paint, she is. You'd be a sensation. Everyone'll think it's done with mirrors. What a finish to the act, eh, when you show 'em it isn't. Belter!

DOCTOR: Oh, that's very flattering, but no. There's evil in the universe, Maxie, and some of that evil is here, right here and right now. It must be fought. It's just, well, it's just what I do, that's all.

MAX: Fair enough, Doctor. Fair enough. But listen, if you ever change your mind, you know where I am. Anyway, look, sorry to take a left turn, old son, but you know how it is. One of those nights, tonight. Just one of those nights. ALBERT: Yeah, I know.

MAX: Right.

ALBERT: I put her in her mother's shed.

EVELYN: What, Emily?

ALBERT: Yeah, Emily.

MAX: Blimey, that'll give her a bit of a turn when she uses her lawnmower, won't it?

ALBERT: She's safe in the shed.

EVELYN: Oh, Doctor, I think poor Albert's in shock.

DOCTOR: Yes, I agree. The Tardis's arrival barely phased him. Now listen, Albert. Listen to me. Will you promise that once all this is over you will go and talk to Emily's mother, and explain what happened?

MAX: Gawd, I'd like to see him try. What would you say if someone told you your daughter had been taken over by an alien intelligence, and the beauty of her soul fought back so hard it killed her?

DOCTOR: I'd be saddened, but I would accept it eventually.

EVELYN: I don't think a 1936 Brighton policeman would be so philosophical.

MAX: Nor do I.

DOCTOR: All right, all right. First things first. We have an enemy to defeat.

EVELYN: And how exactly are we going to do it?

DOCTOR: Oh, with a bit of flim and a bit of flam, and a good deal of red herring.

MAX: You mean, you've worked it out? You know what's going on?

DOCTOR: Yes. I think our mutual friend Professor Talbot knows what he's up against. He doesn't want to submit to the evil on its own terms. Talbot wants to take what he wants and get out. A figure of authority in the world he knows and loves. Still, Talbot is in for a shock.

MAX: This energy won't be played for a sucker.

DOCTOR: Exactly. Talbot's about to find out that his watery friends aren't so easy to trick. And they can't pressurise me into submission, hence, he saved us. A nifty back-up plan. And all it takes is a bit of verve.

TALBOT: (hoarse) And you expect me to believe that, that you saved the Doctor in order to destroy him? I am not an ignoramus, Professor. You humans always fail in the end. You always fail at the crucial moment. (normal) Oh believe me, O Master, the Doctor is a clever one. It took great cunning on my part, great intelligence, to fool him. His ship is damaged beyond repair. It will implode the moment he tries to leave. He is yours to do with as you wish. (hoarse) Ah, interesting. (normal) Oh yes, he is a powerful enemy, but he would make an even more powerful ally. (hoarse) You have done well, Talbot. I will ignore your cavalier attitude just this once. This could be the dawning of a new age for my people. A new planet to plunder. After all these years of incarceration, freedom at last.

(Walking.)

DOCTOR: It came to hand when I was down in the water.

MAX: What did?

DOCTOR: A metal bar, pure and simple. It was the same when, forgive me, Albert, when I was desperately trying to defend myself against the shell of Emily. I grabbed the first thing that came to hand on the beach. It was a piece of driftwood. Down under the pier, there was a metal bar. It was obviously loosened by the continual tide.

MAX: She's built to last, though, bless her heart. The old pier is built to last.

DOCTOR: Er, right. In any event, luckily for me, she was shedding a quite sizeable chunk of metal. I thrashed frantically. Instead of pulsating even more violently, once the metal connected, the force decreased. You were released from its power instantly. The aftermath of the brainwaves it had forced through your minds lingered for several hours thereafter, but memories came flooding back. For all intents and purposes, it was disabled. If I can disable it once, I can disable it again.

EVELYN: Permanently?

DOCTOR: Well, in theory, yes.

MAX: And in practice?

DOCTOR: We shall have to see, won't we?

ALBERT: With that bit of wire?

DOCTOR: This bit of wire, as you call it, young man, is your lifeline to an existence without a mind-numbing alien force dictating to you. You'll have enough dictators soon enough, I can assure you. No, this conductor is rather special.

MAX: A bit like old Lyle Taylor. He used to conduct the band on the pier here. Mad as a brush, he was.

EVELYN: I fancy the Doctor means an electricity conductor.

DOCTOR: Indeed I do.

MAX: Well, my mistake. Pardon me for breathing.

DOCTOR: A conductor made of Gallifreyan zinc.

ALBERT: And that's good, is it?

DOCTOR: One of the strongest substances in the known universe, that's all.

MAX: That is good.

DOCTOR: All I need to do is jump in, firmly secure this round the supporting leg of the pier nearest the alien entity, and simply plunge the connection into the mass. Instant freeze-frame.

EVELYN: Oh, it's that simple.

DOCTOR: Well, no, as a matter of fact. There is a slight snag in the plan.

EVELYN: Thought as much.

DOCTOR: Yes, well, old Professor Talbot isn't likely to stand back and think of England as I'm doing his benefactors down, now is he?

MAX: Oh, I should think not.

DOCTOR: Hence, we are walking along the pier, and not rowing to the end.

MAX: Well, I did worry. My maritime skills have been questioned enough, thank you very much.

DOCTOR: Not at all, Maxie. Not at all. You have played your part like the trouper you are. The pure gold of the Music Hall in every sense.

MAX: Well, thank you very much, Doctor. The pure gold of the Music Hall. What a nice bloke he is. I always said he was a lovely bloke.

EVELYN: Oh yes, really lovely.

DOCTOR: Yeah, yeah. All right. Now, are we all au fait with the plan? Albert, you'd better stay out here, by the pier's balustrade.

ALBERT: Okay, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Now don't argue.

ALBERT: I wasn't. I've seen enough of Talbot to last me a lifetime.

DOCTOR: Fine. Just stand there. Now, grab hold of the wire, and when I come out, throw it to me. I'll pop over the side and neutralise the energy. I can't risk Talbot seeing it. He's not stupid. He'll work it out in a moment, and if he works it out, then the energy works it out. Maxie and Evelyn, you come with me. This is full-on bluff, you know. I want you full of the bulldog spirit, Maxie.

MAX: Don't you worry, Doctor. I can talk for England.

DOCTOR: You may just have to. Right, my friends. Once more unto the beach.

DOCTOR [OC]: Talbot. Talbot, can you hear me?

TALBOT: Oh, Doctor, Doctor, don't you ever sleep? Wait one moment. Oh, it come to the time when a fellow can't plan for the future in peace.

(Unlocks door.)

TALBOT: Ah. A welcoming party, I see. The Doctor and his two chums. Well, you'd better come in.

DOCTOR: Never fear, Talbot. I'm not here to harm you.

TALBOT: Oh, indeed. (hoarse) Then who?

MAX: Cor blimey. He did that without moving his lips.

TALBOT: (hoarse) Kill these people.

MAX: What?

TALBOT: I'm so sorry. (sotto) These are my guests. Now, I've already told you that they could be useful. (normal) He never does listen to me.

DOCTOR: Then you listen to me, Talbot. I can save you from this. I can give you back your faith. I can award you true human riches. Compassion, humility.

(Distant roar.)

DOCTOR: Talbot, I implore you. Denounce this evil. Reunite with your fellow man. Fight for the common good against the common foe. Together we can make a difference, and find a position for you in society.

MAX: Doctor, I can't keep on concentrating any more. Say your piece now or not at all.

EVELYN: Yes, Doctor. Hurry. My head is heavy. My thoughts are draining.

DOCTOR: Talbot, concentrate on my voice. I can destroy this evil. I have the words.

TALBOT: Words? What can mere words do?

DOCTOR: Free your mind. Look into mine. Do you see the runic symbols? Concentrate on the runic symbols, as old as Time, as powerful as faith. Concentrate!

TALBOT: I see nothing. Your mind is blocked from me. Your mind is empty. (hoarse) Look deeper.

This creature is holding secrets from us. Secrets that can complete our victory

DOCTOR: Look deep within my subconscious, Talbot. Look deep.

EVELYN: Doctor, hurry. I can't keep my thoughts together for much longer. Hurry.

MAX: Right, Talbot, forget the runic symbols. What about this? Adam and Eve in the Garden dwelt, they were so happy and jolly. I wonder how they would have felt if all the leaves had been. No listen, listen. What if I am? What if I am? Here's one, here's one. Now here is a funny thing. I went home the other night. (door opens and closes) Now there is a funny thing. I went through the kitchen into the bedroom, there's the wife standing there with a bloke, no clothes on. Not a stitch on. Can you imagine that, lady? How's your memory, girl? I said to her, just a minute, girl. Who's this and what's he doing here? She said, now don't go raving mad, Miller. I said, I'm only asking a fair question. Who is he? She said I'll tell you. If you must know, he's a nudist and he's come in to use the phone. Now there's a clever one from the wife, eh?

DOCTOR: Albert? Now! Throw it to me! Albert! Albert!

ALBERT: Not this time, Doctor.

(Splash.)

TALBOT: (crying) What have I done? Oh God, forgive me. What have I done?

EVELYN: It's over. Come back to us. You're free, released from the mental shackles that have bound you.

TALBOT: Free? I can never be free. I can never.

(Running feet approach.)

EVELYN: Talbot. Talbot.

MAX: Has he had it?

(Door opens and closes.)

DOCTOR: (breathless) I'm afraid he has.

EVELYN: You mean, he's dead?

DOCTOR: Yes. That spark of human decency, it finally fought back and won.

EVELYN: But he was no zombie. He wasn't just a human shell controlled by the energy.

DOCTOR: Wasn't he? Wasn't he really? Oh, he had the willpower and the understanding of what he was doing, but it was only the energy that was keeping him alive, using him like it uses all humans. Talbot truly did die fifteen years ago. He was no more in control than Emily, than any of those that disappeared. It was only the dream of social recognition, the dream of authority that kept his mind alert and focussed. Once the metal connected, reality flooded back. Reality, and death. But where Emily succeeded and Talbot failed, was that Emily did not accept her fate. She would not go quietly into the night. Talbot was a willing instrument. He trusted evil. He accepted the word of that which controlled him. His will was theirs.

MAX: And how come you are here? Dry, to boot.

DOCTOR: Ah. I didn't make the connection. Albert did.

EVELYN: And where is Albert? Doctor?

DOCTOR: I'm sorry, Evelyn.

EVELYN: Oh, no. He can't be.

DOCTOR: He knew. He knew all the time. Well, I couldn't risk another bout of that power. My mind was still recovering from the last time. Another brush with that thing down there and I could have lost control completely. Albert realised that. He saw what it had done to his beloved Emily. Oh, at least they are together. And Albert, well, he finally proved it to himself. He really was a hero after all.

(Walking.)

MAX: I still can't grasp this, Doctor. All that death. No one's going to believe me. I'm the last one standing. All that death. Was it really necessary?

DOCTOR: All that death, to prevent total annihilation? Yes, Maxie, I'm afraid it was necessary.

MAX: Well, I suppose that's that, then. This is goodbye.

DOCTOR: Yes, Maxie, it's goodbye.

EVELYN: But those runes you were thought-transferring.

DOCTOR: Oh, as I told you, nonsense. Nonsense to drag Talbot's mind away from the alien control, if only for a few moments. That and a few comic gems from our friend here.

MAX: Ha, well.

DOCTOR: Who was it said that laughter is the best medicine?

MAX: I never worked so hard in all my life, Doctor. Mind you, I like to think that I saw him smile. Just a little twitching round the lips there, eh? But I got that Talbot to smile right at the very end there. Isn't that some kind of victory?

DOCTOR: Some kind of victory, Maxie. Some kind of victory.

EVELYN: And what of the alien force? Will that metal hold it?

DOCTOR: If my calculations are correct, and they invariably are, well, that evil mass will have been dissipated, drawn into and encased within the very structure of the West Pier. The force will be contained and sated.

EVELYN: For all times?

DOCTOR: Don't forget, Evelyn, that stuff is corrosive. It will eat away at the metal structure. The pier will take the strain of what would have consumed every living thing on this planet. The evil remains, the strength is merely sapped.

EVELYN: So, forever?

DOCTOR: Eventually the pier will yield. The energy will consume the metal. But it will be sixty, maybe, or seventy years before the force erodes the pier away completely.

EVELYN: And then what?

DOCTOR: Ah. Then we wait and see.

MAX: Blimey. Sixty or seventy years? Well, I won't be here for a start.

DOCTOR: Ah, but that's where you're wrong.

MAX: What, am I going to me the oldest comedian in captivity?

DOCTOR: Not quite that. But here, on this very spot in fact, you'll leave your mark. There will be, eventually, a little something of you for all eternity, Maxie.

MAX: What? Come on, I won't let on, will I? There's no one to tell. Who's going to believe me anyway?

DOCTOR: Well. Oh, perhaps just this once. I didn't tell you this, but there could be a statue of a certain Brighton comedian.

MAX: A statue? Of me? Here, getaway. What, you mean like a General or politician or something. (Tardis door opens.)

DOCTOR: Or something even more important to a lot of people. A generator of laughter, a conductor of hope, a favourite son, a national treasure.

(Tardis door closes. The Tardis dematerialises.)

MAX: Cor, who'd have thought it. A national treasure. Me, a national treasure. Billy. I've got to tell Billy about all this. Maxie, old son, I've got a funny feeling it's your round.